

THE
H I S T O R Y
OF
T O M W E S T O N.
A NOVEL.

AFTER THE MANNER OF
T O M J O N E S.

By GEORGE BREWER, Esq.
OF THE ROYAL NAVY.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N:

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THE

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ROOM

THIS IS THE FIRST OF THE
HISTORICAL RECORDS OF THE

THE
HISTORY
OF
TOM WESTON.

CHAP. XIII.

Our hero begins to enter the busy scenes of life. His adventures in the vicinity of Grosvenor Square, where the manners of the Great in receiving dependants, and the way of reading a letter of recommendation is introduced for the instruction of such sprigs of nobility as are just transplanted from the nursery-beds of pride.

TOM now arose with that gaiety of heart, and levity of mind which a fine morning and fresh hopes

never fail to give ; he breakfasted at his friend's house, and then went home to dress, that he might wait on the different gentlemen to whom he had letters of recommendation.

Thus we see our hero preparing to be engaged in those disagreeable scenes of life where hope and disappointment meet each other in every step, and elevate and depress by turns, and whose only certain end is a broken heart.

Tom employed some time in dressing himself, for he knew very well that appearances went a great way in the world ; his, however, was at all times such as would have been a letter of self-recommendation to any young lady in England. This was not the case with Mrs. Acid, for when our hero came down, and gave her the key of his room, so far was she from being impressed by a
hand-

handsome person, and good address, that she could not be observed in the least to relax the rigid tension of those muscles which had been all her life habituated to express only moroseness and ill-nature.—Indeed a little vexatious circumstance which had happened at this moment, might have occasioned her to be more out of temper than usual, which was her handkerchief not being properly pinned, it came open just as our hero was speaking, and discovered more of the charms of her person than this lady usually permitted to be seen.

Tom, after wishing her a good morning, set out for Lord Lustre's house, near Grosvenor Square. The brilliant and numerous display of carriages, the grandeur of the houses, and the concourse of the gay glittering world who revolve between the

hours of three and five, round St. James's Street and Pall Mall, filled our hero with ideas little consonant with his situation; he was elevated by hope, and depressed by comparison; his rapid imagination placed him one instant lounging in his chariot, and the next, perhaps, in the King's Bench. After many inquiries and perambulations, he arrived at a large magnificent house, where he knocked several times at the door. A number of carriages were waiting, and the hall lined with servants, who trod the ground with all the reflected importance their great master cast on them.

Our hero presented his letter, and requested to know if his lordship was risen; to which he received no answer, while the haughty domestic who took it, kept playing with it in
his

his fingers till the peer's own servant came, and cast a look of the most impertinent observation on poor Tom, who felt extremely at his situation.

Thus we see our hero, the son of a gentleman, in a promenade among footmen; at last he was relieved by a voice which echo'd, "Here Mr. " come up stairs." Tom, in ascending the marble steps, wished himself in his mother's cottage; he was presently ushered into a grand apartment, where the stately bashaw, who was to receive him, was seated in an elbow-chair, under the hair-dresser's hands.

As soon as his lordship perceived Tom, he exclaimed, "So Mr. who " are you?" This cruel interrogatory disconcerted our hero so much, that he was unable to make any answer, before he received an additional in-

fult; “ Well, Sir, what do you
“ want with me ?” Our hero replied,
“ that Mr. Bowden’s letter would
“ perhaps inform his lordship.” — “ I
“ can’t imagine,” returned the peer,
“ how Mr. Bowden could think of
“ me. I knew something of Mr.
“ Bowden some years ago, to be
“ sure, but there is such great interest
“ made for these things, that it is im-
“ possible to do any thing. Besides,
“ I have so many people of rank to
“ oblige. However, young man,
“ you may call again if you like,
“ though I don’t think I can do any
“ thing for you.”

Tom left the room with a very
heavy heart, oppressed by the cruel
pride of a man of rank and boasted
education, whose heart never felt ano-
ther’s distress, or knew how to soften
dis-

disappointment with the language of friendship.

Our hero was almost discouraged from another attendance; but as the houses in which the other two gentlemen lived were contiguous, he thought he might as well finish all his business at once.

A few minutes walk brought him to where Sir Harry Vacant resided. A servant opened the door, who differed in some respect from the generality of those gentlemen. He received Tom very civilly, and shewed him into a parlour, while he ran up stairs with the letters. Sir Harry descended in a few minutes in his morning gown and slippers. This young baronet possessed, with a good person, the most agreeable manner in the world, and wore a constant smile

on his countenance; he could receive a dependant with such politeness, as to make him forget he came only to solicit a favour, and made a promise with such friendly warmth, as removed every doubt of his sincerity.

Sir Harry, the moment he entered, begged Tom to be seated, and holding the letter in his hand, began a long panegyric on the honesty and worth of his friend Bowden; "We
" were are at college together," said he; " Ah, poor Bowden! as good a
" creature as ever lived; a very good
" Grecian, and sung an excellent
" song. But, young gentleman, in
" regard to you, now what can we
" do? I declare, at present, it is
" quite out of my power to procure
" any thing; do me the favour to
" call in a fortnight; be sure you
" call,

“ call, and, in the mean time, I’ll
“ speak to Sir Charles Monkford, he
“ is member for Bedford ; it is but
“ a week since he placed a young
“ man of mine under one of the Se-
“ cretaries of Legation ; it would
“ have been the very thing for you.”

Though there was little dependence in this gentleman’s words of course, yet, so pleasing is a kind reception, that we are led to like the man who is deceiving us.

Our hero walked much lighter than he did before, to the house of Mr. Placid, where he was informed by the servants, that that gentleman was in bed, and dangerously ill. Poor Tom was so engaged in the disappointments of the morning, he wandered some way before he knew where he was, revolving in his mind the difficulties he had to encounter,

the just observation his mother had made, flew instantly to his mind, and he began already to see the futility of his wishes, and would gladly now have been a good mechanic, who, however shut out from the fashionable world, rises every morning above want and uncertainty.

Tom had not proceeded far before he was stopped by a young man he thought he knew, and who proved to be his old friend and school-fellow Bill Soapy; a great many congratulations ensued in the street, where they remained near half an hour shaking hands, till Mr. Soapy proposed to adjourn to the Oxford Coffee-house, which was just by, and frequented by many gentlemen of his acquaintance.

This singular little personage has, I believe, been described to our reader
before

before, when he was at school; but as that period could convey no distinct idea of his person, we shall present him again just as he appeared when our hero met him—that is, a little fat, gross man, with very large head, long ears, peaked chin, and pudding cheeks, his manner was important, business sparkled in his eye, his looks betrayed the citizen, while the rotundity of his belly expressed all the ideas of good living; in short he was an alderman in embryo.

This young gentleman had entered partnership in an extensive line of business, and was already a man of rising consequence. The conversation (extremely natural to those who have not seen each other a long time) turned on their different adventures since they had left Northampton. Mr. Soapy informed Tom, among
B 6 other

other particulars, that he had married a young lady soon after his arrival in London ; that he had taken a country house somewhere on the City Road, and that his only pleasure was to see his old friends, and begged Tom to be a constant visitor.

The bottle having been some time on the table, the liquor began to have its usual effects, and every fresh glass produced new demonstrations of friendship ; invitations and appointments. “ Well, when will you come ; “ don’t use any ceremony ; we have “ always something at home.” So pleasing was the openness and frankness of his friend, and so good the wine he had drank, that our hero’s spirits began to rise ; he forgot the morning’s disappointment, and felt the powerful impulse, of dissipation rushing to his heart.

Ano-

Another hour passed in renewals of friendship, when Tom proposed going to the play, which his friend readily agreed to, and our two young gentlemen sallied out from the tavern arm in arm. My dear fellow, and my good friend, were annexed to every sentence. In short, there was as much regard expended in an hour, as would have put even Pylades and Orestes out of countenance.

The wind now expanding the particles of the wine they had drunk, they began to be more noisy than ever, and sung and danced all along the Strand, to the terror of every passer by.

At last they reeled into the play-house, where our hero, who was much better than his friend, was so struck at the novelty of the place, that he remained some minutes in
silent

silent ecstasy ; he had never been in a side-box before in his life, and reviewed with infinite pleasure the pleasing objects round him. His heart began to dance and flutter with pride ; he observed the gay, easy, libertine manner of the gentlemen near him, and excelled at once by imitation ; he was the coxcomb of a moment.

The multiplicity of lights, the voice of Billington, the arrested attention of the house, and the range of beauties in the side long row, seemed as an Arabian tale to the confused imagination of poor Weston ; he gave way to a thousand different impressions—novelty dispossessed novelty, and attraction displaced attraction.

At last, however, the wanderer was caught, and his eye fixed at once
on

on a beautiful woman in the next box, who possessed all that grandeur of person, and embonpoint necessary to constitute a fine woman; the most beautiful eye brows encircled the radii of that penetrating organ, where luxuriant pleasures dance in every movement; a fine row of teeth, the fairest complexion, the most beautiful hair, and features full of tenderness and love, were only abstracts of her beauties.

Such is the description of the charming stranger, who, with the additions of dress, and a plume of nodding feathers, could have completed almost any conquest.

Our hero soon found an opportunity of reducing the distance of the objects, in which, I believe, the attraction of beauty much exceeds that
of

of gravity mentioned by Sir Isaac Newton, and was presently in the same box, where she being seated next him, the all-exploring eye of love, dived into every accessible beauty, and indeed, by a proper adjustment at the glass, certain avenues near her handkerchief were left open, replete with temptation, and favoured the inquiries our young natural philosopher made.

Women afford to men of amorous complection, a subtle poison, which they suck in with every beauty.

Above all places, the playhouse is the most suited to intrigue; the most dangerous kind of conversation is indulged, and opportunities present themselves every moment. Love between the hours of six and eleven,

is

is not only performing on the stage; Cupid mixes in the crowd, and is seen one moment dancing over the forms in the galleries, among the young maids and shopkeepers prentices, who are employed in eating oranges, and drinking beer; the next in some remote side box, where Miss Demure sits listening to a tale of tenderness, while her amorous spark giggles at his own folly, and cocking his eye glass, fancies himself admired, or yawning looks at his watch, or falls asleep.—A little farther on, perhaps, is seated a prude, a tall fellow next her, pays her a compliment, while she turns her head aside; these repulses may be too frequent. In the front box, the fat comely widow of a cit sits laughing at the tragedy, talks aloud to Mr. Blank the stock broker

broker in the next feat, and makes an assignment of her heart to the dear man by all the laws of vision.

Thus dexterous were the female artillery in their different modes of attack, when Melinda, superior to all in the art of love, fixed her eyes on Tom, and in the same way as the rattle-snake keeps within the fascinating power of its eye the little fluttering bird, did she transfix our unsuspecting youth; mixing soft rapturous glances with a modest and bashful deportment equally destructive; languishing and brilliant by turns, inviting and rejecting in the same moment. Our hero unable to withstand experiments in love, which he knew nothing of, gave way at once, forgot his Charlotte, and plunged into all the luxury of ideas,
wished

wished to be great, that he might be imprudent; and rich, that he might be extravagant. He could imagine nothing equal to the possession of such a woman, and burned with all the force of passion.

The moments passed thus agreeably with our hero, while his honest friend joined the sweet notes of Billington with the sonorous echo of his nose; his stupid head reclining against a pillar, and his legs extended on the seat; sometimes indeed the acclamations of the house awakened him, when he always grumbled to himself;—"there is too much of the
"squalins by half, I never heard such
"stuff, a parcel of Italians, it's a
"shame, Englishmen!" Thus did our inanimate critic pass his time; while poor mad frantic Tom plunged
into

into ecstasies, favoured all the extravagant powers of the imagination; themusic, the dancing, the singing, were alexipharmics that raised the fever to its height; every thing served to indulge the romance of the moment. Tom, who observed the studied politeness of those about him, made an offer of some fruit, which was accepted; this extravagant etiquette alarmed him for an instant; he had but little money, and no prospect of having more; but such ridiculous scruples were soon got over, and a conversation which was presently permitted by the fair stranger, overthrew at once all his resolutions. He had never experienced so voluptuous a dialogue; he dwelt with pleasure on every word, and paused with astonishment at the grace and eloquence he observed:

observed: naturally volatile and gay, he mixed in all the wit and double entendre the moment afforded.

When a dexterous woman throws in the line, and the silver hook baited with love and flattery, the angler must succeed.

Our hero (and sorry we are to mention it) felt at this hour a secret inclination for intrigue; he had heard of the pleasures, the dangers, and the credit of "unarrangement," and was foolish enough to enter on the campaign without either artifice or prudence to assist him.

The conversation began every moment to be more interesting, when the curtain falling, the lady apparently very much alarmed, exclaimed, "good God, I can't see my servant any where; what shall I do!"

Tom

Tom offered her immediately his assistance to find him. To which she made some very polite answer, such as, "Sir, I thank ye, but—my brother's carriage will be here presently; he promised he'd bring it back immediately; I dare say he don't think the play is over."

Half an hour had passed in fruitless expectation of the carriage, when, with much persuasions, she accepted a hack.

Our hero, forgetting his friend who was seeking him in the lobby, run down stairs in a delirium of pleasure, and had just obtained a coach, when he perceived he had lost his watch. For a moment he was frantic, till feeling his pocket he found his money was safe, and pleased himself with the idea that he had not lost both, which must have occasioned

caſioned him to have given up the pleaſing hopes he had formed from this adventure.

The reader may eaſily ſuppoſe the circumſtance of the watch was ſoon forgot, when our enamoured hero led the charming Melinda to the carriage, exulting in his good fortune, and lavishing his money among the link boys and pickpockets that ſurrounded him. At laſt our hero, and his fair partner, were eclipsed from the multitude by the coachman's ſhutting the door, and leaving them to any amuſing ſubject they might think proper, while he mounted his box, and went off with a jehu for Queen Ann Street, Eaſt.

Our hero, though young in the art of love, was not long at a loſs for converſation; he had a great deal of natural gallantry, and improved
very

very sensibly during the little time they were together. Indeed the lady with whom he had the honour to be tête-à-tête would have soon educated a much greater novice in those matters.

The beautiful Melinda knew too well the ardent passions of youth, to grant too many favours at first; what she permitted one moment, she forbid the next, and like a skilful general advanced and retreated, till she could insure a victory; she now informed our hero that she had felt, at first seeing him, a penchant that, though fearful of owning, she found impossible to disguise; “love,” cried the accomplished Melinda, “is ever
“ indiscreet; and women are too ready
“ yield to so pleasing a crime. I have
“ myself experienced what it is to
“ have too tender a heart; but my
I “ views

“ views have been confined ; my
“ friends few, and among the most
“ accomplished of your sex ; I have
“ been courted, admired, and sought
“ by many ; but only with a favourite
“ I am happy—and do not be too
“ hasty in condemning me, if I tell
“ you, that you (sighing) are one—.”

This pleasant conversation continued till the coach stopped at a house in Queen Ann Street East, and our hero was ushered into a parlour very prettily furnished ; a very elegant sofa was placed near the fire, on which the charming Melinda reclined to some advantage, and renewed the subject of their meeting, amusing our hero with a number of very curious anecdotes, among which not a word was mentioned of her brother or the chariot.

Time passed thus pleasingly away till supper was introduced, to which Tom sat down without being able to touch a morsel ; the wine, however, was so good, and the conversation so voluptuous, that his ideas began to revolve swifter than Mercury in his orbit ; he indulged the charming delirium that had seized him, and sunk in all the luxuries of imagination. Frantic with pleasure he seized the hand of the fair Melinda, and in a transport of ecstasy swore she was the most charming woman on earth ; the favorable crisis was now arrived, when a trifling embarrassment was mentioned by the lady that gave her great uneasiness ; a man had called two or three times that day for a bill, it was only a small sum, only five guineas, but she
could

could not think of being obliged to ask her brother for it.

Though this would have sobered almost any man in the world, it had no such effect on poor Tom; he drew instantly his purse from his pocket, and begged her to accept it, which she at last did, though with great reluctance.

I shall not proceed to the sequel of this adventure; I have gone far enough to shew how easily the unwary are taken in; and though the conduct of our hero may appear to the experienced rake, the height of cullibility, yet I must observe in his defence, that when the spirits are elevated, money lying useless in the pocket, and a fine woman endeavouring to draw it out, few are able to reject the exchange.

C H A P. XIV.

Mr. Weston's return to his lodgings ; the adventures that followed ; the progressive change that takes place in our hero's circumstances ; and the false hopes he is led to indulge.

IT was near one o'clock when our hero left Queen Ann Street East, and by the friendly assistance of the watchmen found the way to his lodgings in Drury Lane.

The house of Mrs. Acid had however long before been closed in sober order ; the shutters put up, the windows fastened, and the street door chained and barricadoed, so that the gate of this inaccessible castle was proof to all the thumps, knocks, and
kicks

kicks Tom gave against it, nor was there the least prospect of gaining admittance by expostulation; for had the house been besieged by legions of constables, watchmen, &c. this resolute lady would have held a long parley before she would have let them in.

Tired at last with the repeated calls of "Mrs. Acid, open the door! Mrs. Acid, open the door!" she appeared at the window in her shift, which hung pendant from the right shoulder to the left elbow—this accidental drapery appeared to be the consequence of a tear or rent of no small dimensions.

Mrs. Acid's countenance, naturally hard and inflexible, was now tortured with all the expressions of anger and contempt; "Ay ay, there you may be!" was the only an-

fewer our hero could procure, except some inarticulate growlings that resembled in sound the lower notes of a bassoon.

The watchmen had now left Tom to himself, who, tired with waiting, and being in his own ideas as great as a prince, was just on the point of breaking the windows in revenge for the treatment he had received, when the door opened, and Mrs. Acid, who had put on a flowered night gown, began—"Indeed, Mr. Weston, this
"won't do for me; I can't agree to
"this, to have my rest broken at
"these unseasonable hours; no gentleman I am sure would wish it:"
our hero used all the palliatives in his power, and assured her his being out so late was entirely accident, and that he should not on any account disturb her in future at such hours. But
it

it required more time than he thought to silence the thunder he had raised, which still kept growling at a distance.

Mrs. Acid, eager to retreat from the dangerous situation in which she thought herself, (which was nothing less than being left with a handsome youth, half undrest, and in a dark entry) waddled up stairs before him. Tom, who described an orbit exceedingly irregular, and even when he stood still had a sensible aberration, made in ascending a false step, and endeavouring (as is natural for people in danger of falling) to save himself by catching hold of something near him, he made a violent grasp at the calf of Mrs. Acid's leg, which firm pillar broke his fall; the lady, however, the moment she felt the fingers of a man approaching so near

her — person, set up the most violent and incessant screams, repeating the words “ a rape, a rape, “ I’m ruined !”

Mrs. Bincks, a beef-eater’s wife in the back room on the first floor, hearing her cries, echoed them with the additions of “ murder, thieves, “ the monster, the monster !” — while Miss Olive, a milliner in the second, descended boldly, en chemise, to the spot where our hero lay. It was with this lady he endeavoured to remonstrate, which he did with some success, as she immediately cleared up the mystery to all parties, by calling out in a very sweet voice, “ that it was only the gentleman in “ the second floor a little tipsy !” Mrs. Acid, after abusing poor Tom, really more than he deserved, went grumbling to bed ; Mrs. Bincks retired,

tired, wondering what he had been doing, and Miss Olive tripped away to her bedchamber, smiling to herself at the extraordinary taste Tom evinced.

She, however, was determined not to let this adventure pass over in silence, and resolved to use all the powers of raillery to convince him he might have chose a more agreeable subject than Mrs. Acid to make experiments on.

The moment this young lady had barricaded her door, and retired between the sheets, she called out to our hero to know if he was in bed; but whatever desire she might have for a midnight conversation, it was at this time impracticable; for so overcome was poor Tom with the soporific power of the wine he had been drinking, that he paid no attention

whatever to what she said, but flung himself with all the stupidity of drunkenness on his bed, where he lay near eight hours, and then awoke, to experience for the first time in his life the effects of a debauch, to feel an excessive and unsupportable head-ach, and to suffer the most extreme anxiety of mind.

The circumstance of his losing his watch, the charming lady he had left, and the five guineas he had parted with, now came to his remembrance; he cursed the folly of the night, swore at the pickpockets, and wished his *Dulcinea* at the devil—reason began to expostulate, prudence upbraided, and common sense ridiculed the plan he had adopted. He now thought of his friend, Mr. Bowden's maxims, and determined to amend his error in time.

Our

Our hero went to Mr. Maclean's to breakfast, and in the course of conversation introduced the circumstance of losing his watch, concealing, no doubt, some other relative particulars. The kind attention of these good people soon removed the discontent that reigned in his bosom, and restored that cheerfulness of disposition, which was his chief characteristic.

To the honor of our hero be it spoken, that he now kept strictly to his resolution, absented himself from all expensive pleasures; and found sufficient amusement in taking a walk in the park, or going to see a comedy in the pit. Some months passed on in this way, without any thing happening to the advantage of our hero; the baronet, indeed, made him several promises, and required his constant attendance to be ready in

case he heard of any thing. He had besides waited several times on Lord Lustre without being able to see him, and was almost tired out with fruitless expectations.

Tom formed during this vacation a very agreeable friendship with Miss Olive, whom he found to be a very sensible girl. She knew a great deal of life and was very well educated, besides possessing a manner that ensured esteem.

Our hero frequently took his tea in her room, and would indeed have been with her much oftener, if he had not been afraid of the prying, curious, and all-seeing eye of the discreet Mrs. Acid, who set her face very much against such doings (as she called them) in her house; they however found opportunities, and no doubt improved them as much

as

as possible. On a Sunday evening they were always together, when Mrs. Acid was at the tabernacle, and a general exit made from the house to the Long Fields, Bagnigge Wells, &c.

We can only say in defence of our hero, for entering on this harmless intrigue, that we believe, in the natural order of things, few young men in his situation would have refused drinking tea with a girl like Miss Olive, even in her bedchamber; and besides that it perhaps kept him from more dangerous connections.

It was with our pretty milliner Tom usually passed his hours, except when he was engaged at the house of his city friend, where he sometimes staid two or three days together. He found Mrs. Soapy a very agreeable woman, and possessed of a mildness
of

of disposition that made every one like her.

A train of difficulties began now to oppose any hopes poor Tom might have of future success; his money was nearly expended, and no chance whatever appeared of his getting an employ. It was impossible for Mr. Maclean to afford him any farther assistance; he had run behind very much himself, and had a large family to support; indeed, Tom would not permit him to suffer by a generosity that he was too ready to extend on every occasion. To add to his distresses, he had not received any letter for some time from Mr. Bowden, to whom he had written twice, without an answer. Lord Lustre had given him a serious negative; and Sir Harry Vacant shuffled him off repeatedly with his usual complaisance.

Our

Our hero began now to feel a gradual cadence : he had had several little supplies from Mr. Bowden, and knew no other quarter to apply to. His cloaths began to appear shabby—his spirits sunk, and he became every day more reserved and serious.

In this insupportable manner did poor Tom pass a considerable length of time ; the near approach of poverty made him form many of those romantic projects that are too ready to enter the minds of the disappointed, such as turning strolling player, going in the country in the character of a footman, advertising for a place as a shopman, book-keeper at an inn, or clerk to an auctioneer ; all which desperate resolves were set aside by that despotic ruler called fate, who decides sometimes better for us than we can for ourselves.

For

“ For whatsoe’er we perpetrate,
“ We do but row, we’re steer’d by fate.”

For it was at this moment when poor Tom was in the height of despair, and his pockets at the lowest ebb, two servants came to the door, nearly at the same instant, the one from Sir Harry Vacant, who desired to see him immediately; and the other from Mr. Placid, informing our hero that that gentleman was much better, and requested to see him as soon as convenient.

The hair-dresser was sent for, the cloaths brushed up, the silk stockings mended, and a new waistcoat put on for the occasion. Our hero began already to indulge a thousand agreeable hopes; his imagination placed before him all the pleasures of employment, above all, the being able to discharge

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charge his debts, and make a change in his appearance; he had actually fixed upon the colour of a new coat, and decided on the pattern of an elegant pair of silver buckles; he fung a catch under the hands of the frieur, danced before the looking-glass, walked about the room when he was dressed, with an air of new consequence, and swelled at once into all the pride of success.

Our hero flew on the wings of expectation (the sure prognostic of disappointment) to the house of Mr. Placid, where he was received by the old gentleman with all the liberality that he could wish; he however told him he could not do any thing for him till the meeting of Parliament, when some of his old friends would be in town, and even then could not promise him success.

As

As it was some months to the period Mr. Placid had fixed on to use his endeavours, our hero felt as much as if he had met with an absolute disappointment ; his situation wanted an immediate change, and he looked forward with little pleasure, to a time, before which ruin was inevitable.

Our hero arrived at Sir Harry Vacant's house just in time to see that gentleman, who was going out, " Oh ! Mr. Weston," cried the Baronet, " I'm glad to see you, I sent for you to —— to know the nature of the employment you want."—" Sir," returned Tom, " Mr. Bowden's contains the —— "—" Yes, I know," answered Sir Harry, " but I have lost it somehow ; I can't think where I laid it." Our hero went over again the particulars of his
ap pli-

application, while Sir Harry, who paid no attention whatever to what he said, stepped into his chariot, saying all the way he went, "Well, Mr. Weston, we'll see what can be done for you."

Poor Tom returned rather slower, and much more reasonable than he set out; he now found by experience, that things seldom (to use a very common saying) "drop into our mouths."

However at his return to Mr. Maclean's house, he found a letter from Mr. Bowden, the contents of which made some amends for the disappointments of the morning, read with joy the following epistle:—

"My dear Tom,

"The pleasure I received in hearing from you, would have been
"great

“ great indeed, had the words been
“ dictated by a more happy mind;
“ your situation, indeed, is seri-
“ ous; the torment of suspense, the
“ being out of employ, and a fruitless
“ and expensive attendance on the
“ great, are the most cruel of all
“ situations.

“ But remember that the Provi-
“ dence that blesses all her children,
“ will not desert you any more than
“ the rest; you have not yet by bad
“ and ungenerous conduct reversed
“ her pleasing decrees, and accompa-
“ nied by vice (who is ever ready to
“ doubt her kindness) stepped into a
“ path of your own, and rejected her
“ assistance.

“ I am not much surprised at the
“ reception you have met with from
“ Lord Lustre, and Sir Harry Va-
“ cant;

“cant; to people who know the
“world, such things are common.
“But I am sorry for you, whose
“young mind must be startled at
“such baseness.

“I rest however some hopes on
“Mr. Placid, whose disposition is to
“take those by the hand who have
“experienced neglect and disap-
“pointment from the others.

“Your cousin Humphrey is here,
“and I fear will soon break his fa-
“ther’s heart; he is the most noted
“fox-hunter in the county, and
“drinks and games with any one he
“meets; treats his aunt with the
“greatest contempt, and is in every
“respect a bad young man. Mr.
“Weston is just the same as ever;
“he is one of those beings who live
“without notice or esteem, and will
“die unlamented; his manners, like
“those

“ those of the Egyptians, have known
“ no innovation, and have been in-
“ variably the same for at least thirty
“ years past.

“ I have wrote to your worthy
“ friends Mr. and Mrs. Maclean, to
“ thank them for the friendship they
“ have shewn in seeing you comforta-
“ bly situated, and have remitted Mr.
“ Maclean the small sum he was so
“ good as to lend, and I have be-
“ sides inclosed five guineas for you,
“ merely that you may remember
“ you have one friend left in Nor-
“ thampton.

“ I remain, dear Tom,

“ Your sincere friend,

“ and servant,

“ ABEL BOWDEN.”

This was one of those kind of let-
ters which, though they convey little
or any thing to our interest, serve at
least

least to put us in humour with ourselves, and to smoothe the rough edge of disappointment, by the pleasing remembrance that we have still one friend left.

CHAP.

C H A P. XV.

Our hero meets with a very pleasing adventure, which is followed by a train of other agreeable events.

IT is observable in those unfortunate people who deal in vicissitude, that fortune either draws them all blanks at once, or else is foolishly profuse in her prizes.

This it is that makes the superstitious term those lucky days, which begin with some pleasing omen; and those unlucky, which commence with some misadventure. It is very well known that most of our victories in the East Indies were owing to the advantage we took of those deluded people, who were incapable of resist-

resisting or going out to fight at an ominous or inauspicious hour.

And there are many very sensible people among us, who after breaking a bottle, a looking-glass, or a tea-cup, ensure themselves some very great ill fortune; and the coming back when set out on business, the following a burial, or meeting a drove of bullocks, (which by the bye, may be met at any hour on a market day) have often occasioned a pursuit to be given up of great consequence, or an affair to have been neglected in which we were almost certain of success.

On the contrary, if we put a stock-ing on the wrong side outwards, tumble up stairs, or meet a flock of sheep, we sally out at the auspicious moment, though in the midst of a shower, till after some tedious hours of delay and disappointment,

we return to find an excuse for our oracle.

Whether these things exist, or whether they do not, I shall not pretend to say; thus far, however, I shall go along with the credulous reader, that when the spirits are damped by any cross, vexatious accident, it is then no proper time for business; for when we are low at heart, we yield easily to every little impediment, and are borne resistless down the stream of disappointment; nor on the other side, can there be a more favourable moment than when we are happy in ourselves, and in good health and spirits.

Our melancholy youth indulged sometimes the foolish ideas I have been speaking of, and one morning in particular flattered himself with some very pleasing incident, from a little linnet flying in at his window, which
he

he was lucky enough to make a prisoner.

Although he had risen with an extreme lowness of spirits, this trivial circumstance insensibly removed the weight, and after having eat his breakfast with more appetite than usual, he dressed himself as well as his wardrobe would permit, with an intention of taking a walk to the Park, fond of indulging melancholy, and placed Miss Acton's picture in his bosom.

Our hero had hardly been in the Mall a quarter of an hour, when walking up towards Buckingham House in a thoughtful mood, and engaged in a very old subject that still retained a place in his heart, he felt something jumping up to his hand, which at first rather startled him:—but imagine his surprise, his astonishment,

when he saw his poor honest Keeper by his side, who still remembering his old master, had thus affectionately accosted him. Our hero felt so much at this accident, that though a great many people were near him, he could not refrain kneeling down to caress his old companion; and was thus naturally employed when he heard a female voice calling Keeper's name with all the accents of affright and concern.

Our hero turned about involuntary, when he heard the sound, repeating to himself; "Is it possible!" while Miss Acton, equally affected, echoed the words with a tenderness that came from the heart, and nearly sunk into Mr. Weston's arms.

The reader who has ever felt the pleasure of a meeting like this, will enjoy the tender natural scene, though
it

it may occasion a sigh at the past and most pleasing incidents of his life.

Tom, who had now risen, took the hand of the gentle Charlotte, while she permitted herself to be drawn to a seat near them. Keeper was led aside by Miss Acton's footman, who had entered into conversation with an old fellow servant, and the lovers left entirely to themselves.

"Kind Heaven!" exclaimed Mr. Weston, "can you at once recompense me for all my misfortunes—
"give me but this hour unmolested,
"and reserve what future ills you
"please."

"After what my confusion has already expressed," returned Miss Acton, "it would be ridiculous to
"deny that I am pleased at the incident that has brought us again together; your poor companion has
"been with me ever since you left

D 3 "Wooburn,

“Wooburn; and I must own, the
“generous concern manifested in
“the face and actions of that kind
“animal, have interested me more
“than any thing, even in the con-
“cealed misfortunes of his master.”

“Generous girl!” cried our hero;
“and is it possible that tender heart
“can be so much interested in the
“fate of a stranger—a poor unhappy
“wretch, whose history is a secret,
“and whose name is ever blotted out
“from among the meanest of man-
“kind.”

“My sentiments,” returned Miss
Acton, “do but ill agree with the
“generality of opinions, and however
“romantic it may appear; those
“very misfortunes which you dwell
“on so much, were the source of all
“my esteem, and engaged my friend-
“ship when in any other situation
“you

“you might have expected only re-
“serve.

“And I think,” continued Miss Acton, “I have now said enough
“to demand the subject of those
“difficulties, which as a friend I
“ought to share.”

“Then madam,” cried Tom,
“you see before you one whose
“former days were brightened with
“a pleasing prospect. But the sun
“that warmed his early hopes is set,
“and the wretch you pity, con-
“demned to drag out a remnant of
“his life, to be filled only with cruel
“disappointments and misfortune.”

“I wish,” returned the tender Charlotte, “you would be more ex-
“plicit; I know, I am convinced
“you are what you seem—but why
“conceal misfortunes that serve only

“to cast a lustre on the history of the
“unfortunate?”

“Madam,” cried our hero, “let
“me be still a stranger: keep, how-
“ever, this poor hostage, (pointing
“to his dog) and let me wander a
“little longer unknown; perhaps
“—” — “Perhaps,” cried Miss
Acton in an indistinct voice, “you
“may wander too long.”

“What does my Charlotte mean,
“what mystery do these words con-
“tain?”

“Nothing,” returned Miss Ac-
ton.

“Pray,” interrupted Mr. Weston,
“express yourself more clearly, I
“am prepared to hear the worst, nor
“can misfortune imprint a deeper
“sorrow than what is already planted
“in my breast.”

“No,”

“No,” returned Miss Acton, “my
“ misfortunes are my own ; I have
“ only one word more to say, for it
“ is improper we should be seen to-
“ gether ; you have found your poor
“ dog, and when you look at him,
“ remember the care his mistress took
“ of him for your sake ; and then ask
“ yourself whether such a friend de-
“ serves to be doubted. But perhaps
“ —when it is too late for me to
“ listen !”

“ Good Heaven !” cried our hero,
“ What do I hear ?—Fate has, I per-
“ ceive, more yet in reserve for me—
“ too late to listen !”

“ Be but sincere,” returned Miss
Acton, “ and it shall never be too
“ late.”

“ Kind creature ! ” exclaimed
Tom, “ I have been indeed a wretch,
“ to fear that you, like all the world,

“ would hear my misfortunes, and
“ then coolly say adieu ; but pardon a
“ wretched madman, whose phrenzy
“ would not permit him to distinguish
“ from his surrounding enemies, so
“ kind, so true a friend !”

Here a mutual explanation took place ; Tom related all his difficulties, and was pleased to find his Charlotte’s sensibility only the more awakened at the story. “ You know, ” cried the gentle Charlotte when he had finished ; “ how much my father loves me, and that though he often
“ mentions you, he knows nothing
“ of the particulars of your fortune,
“ so that it is impossible he should
“ esteem you as he ought : imagining
“ me equally uninterested, he has
“ introduced to our family, a gentle-
“ man, who next to yourself I esteem
“ the most on earth. Though the
“ most

“most accomplished of men, he pos-
“sesses the best of hearts; and with
“all the beauties of person, unites
“the perfections of the mind; his
“fortune is considerable, and his
“generosity and benevolence equal to
“the power he has of doing good.
“Such is your rival, and a dangerous
“one;—be but true, however, and
“you need not fear him.”

Our enraptured hero here released the most beautiful hand in the world, imprinting on it a thousand kisses, then took from his bosom this little accidental pledge he had had so long of her regard. “This little talisman,” cried Tom, “possesses a
“magic power over misfortunes, and
“can rule even the decrees of fate.” Miss Acton was exceedingly surprised when she saw it was her own picture, and listened very attentively

to the story of his finding it; this generous girl, however, refused to take it back, begging him to keep a charm in which he had so much faith; and after a very tender adieu, left our hero to contemplate on his good fortune; he was, however, still at a loss how to benefit by the kind invitation she had given him from her father to visit them at their house in Harley Street. He was too delicate to introduce himself again to Sir Julius, and resolved for the present time to content himself with writing to Miss Acton under a cover to her maid, which plan was proposed by the lovely Charlotte herself.

Almost every one has experienced one day or other the gaiety and pleasantness which is felt after a change from bad fortune to good.

This

This desirable sweet that corrects so well the bitters of misfortune, now entered into the disposition of our hero, who danced along the the street, humming a tune all the way he went, regardless of every object round him.

Our hero just arrived at Mr. Maclean's door with the postman, who came there with a letter for him, enclosed in a frank cover. Tom could not imagine at first who this correspondent could be, Mr. Bowden having wrote to him only the day before, and his two patrons being in town.

Our hero tore open the seal full of expectation: but how much was he astonished, when he found a piece of paper inside neatly folded up, which bore the agreeable characters of a hundred pound bank note. The contents of the letter were as follows:—

“ Dear Tom,

“ I have the most agreeable of all
“ commissions to execute, to send
“ my dear boy good news: to be
“ short, our old friend Admiral Grap-
“ lin has been here, and taken pos-
“ session again of the estate he had
“ parted with. His first inquiries
“ were after your dear mother, and I
“ cannot express in sufficient terms,
“ how much this good old gentle-
“ man was affected when he heard of
“ your misfortunes—the effect has
“ been, that he has desired me to
“ transmit to you a hundred pound,
“ and to request that you will call on
“ him when he is in town, at No.
“ 10, St. James’s Street. Pray, my
“ dear child, be prudent, and excuse
“ the advice of your old

“ Friend and servant,

“ ABEL BOWDEN.”

Our

Our hero, who had been reading this pleasing epistle at the door, run into the parlour with so much haste to Mr. Maclean, that he overturned the little girl, who had a mug of small beer in her hand, broke a china plate, and had nearly killed a tabby cat that lay in his way, before he could convey the good news he had received.

The first thing our hero did, as it is natural with young people, was to change the note, and the next, to make large offers of cash to Mr. Maclean, almost insisting on his taking it; but that good man declined taking any more than a couple of guineas to pay a little debt in the neighbourhood.

The children, however, were loaded with toys, and this good family obliged to accept of a treat, the poulterer

terer was sent for, Mrs. Maclean dispatched to market, some fresh logs put on the fire, and a good supper prepared; plenty of rum and brandy was provided, and the table presently covered with lemons and Seville oranges. In short a very social evening, and an excellent bowl of punch were the consequences of Tom's success.

CHAP.

C H A P. XV.

In which Tom meets his old school fellow Rattle—A very interesting promenade in St. James's Park, and some new arrangements our hero is advised to make.

OUR hero, who had now provided himself with the little requisites of dress, began to move in a somewhat higher sphere. To lounge in the coffee-houses about St. James's, saunter up and down Pallmall, and sport his figure in the Park, or at the auctions.

It is true, he could not afford to drive his greys, keep his girl, lose a thousand or two at the Mount, or bet at a boxing match; yet he had the inclination to do even more, and would, had it been

been in his power, have excelled in folly and dissipation any accomplished nobleman of the present day.

He had supplied himself with all the little necessary helps to the actions and gestures of a gentleman; a spy glass hung by a blue ribbon from his button hole; and a very handsome ring graced his little finger.

He had attained from the idleness of his situation, the necessary ennui of a man of fashion, and had learnt all the grimace of a drawing room, the playhouse lobbies, &c. for he was an excellent mimic, and could either assume the manners of a polite, fine gentleman, or the fierce and warlike deportment of the bucks, gentlemen pugilists, and honourable boxers.

But in spite of whatever he might adopt, the natural character of the man remained, and unless he indulged

ged the eccentricity of the moment, the gentleman moved in every step, and ease and elegance triumphed over affectation and blackguardism.

Our hero was one morning engaged in perusing the World, at St. James's coffee-house, when he observed a young man enter the room, whose face he thought he remembered. He was dressed in a brown coat, vellum holes at the cape, white kerseymere waistcoat and breeches, and boots; he had besides a cockade in his hat, and was arm and arm with an officer in the guards. Tom was so certain of being right in his conjecture, that he addressed by the name of Rattle, who after a moment's pause returned, "Weston, by G—! my dear boy, how do ye do?"—"Damme Sir," to the officer, "an old friend, an old school-fellow." The captain, after a little
conver-

conversation of the news of the day, very politely withdrew, and left Tom and his friend Rattle together, who soon entered on their old school subjects, after which, each related the particular fortune he had met with in London.

Rattle informed our hero that he had a commission in the guards, which he was about selling. “Damme Weston, my dear boy, I am devilish near being cut up. My uncle won’t give me a sixpence. I lost a hundred pound last week. Damme, who should think of meeting you—where do you live, is old Weston dead? You lodge at the west end, I suppose; a snug apartment, my boy, with a little nightingale in the cage.”

Our hero was too well acquainted with his friend’s vivacity to attempt
keeping

keeping pace with him. Every sentence this gentleman used contained a different subject—every period was closed with an oath, and his most serious reflections always finished with a jest; for Rattle was never reasonable above a moment together.

He paid very little attention to Tom's relation, and only ridiculed our hero's fears on account of the uncertainty of his situation, and little hope he had of employment: every thing he advanced on the subject was answered with, "Oh! damme Sir, you'll do, you'll do; never fear, the old boy will come round."

At one adventure of Tom's, however, Rattle laughed heartily, which was that he met with at the play. "I tell you what," cried Rattle when he had done, "Weston, damme, I've

“ a respect for you, I’ll put you up to
“ a thing or two; ay, if you knew as
“ much of the world as I do—the
“ knew you was a flat.—Well, dam-
“ me, I am glad to see you.”

Mr. Rattle now proposed a walk in the Park, which was gladly accepted by Tom, and on the way this gentleman amused his friend with innumerable instances of his own gallantry—bilking the Covent Garden ladies, &c. and his address in taking in the flats, shuffling the cards, &c. “ Dam-
“ me, my boy, I lost at billiards this
“ morning, and yet I don’t know
“ how it was, there is not a man can
“ play with me in England; but I
“ thought I had got a flat against me,
“ and played careless; besides, he was
“ a good thing, and I was in hopes
“ of doing him. Do you play?—Jack
“ Dashwood and I—do you know

“ Jack ? As hearty a fellow as ever
“ lived—spend a guinea with you at
“ any time—Ah ! poor Jack, poor
“ Jack !” This amusing history
continued till our friends found them-
selves in the Mall, which was exceed-
ingly crowded.

Rattle was at such a time the best
companion in the world ; he was,
(as has been before observed) possessed
of a great deal of wit ; was very inge-
nious in his remarks, and knew a
great deal of life ; he rallied almost
every body, and spared none but the
generous and unfortunate.

“ I will now,” said he, “ take up-
“ on me the office of the Diable Boi-
“ teux, and though I cannot have the
“ intelligence of Asmodeus, still I
“ think I can pretty nearly inform
“ you of the situation, character, and
“ disposition of half the people you
“ see,

“ see, particularly the state of their
“ finances, for which I have a sympathy
“ thetic rule; and though I cannot
“ determine their fates, like the little
“ French devil, still I can point out
“ with mathematical exactness pretty
“ nearly the end to which they go—
“ ha, ha, ha, there’s a subject just
“ before us; do you see that man in
“ the green coat, with a black silk
“ cape, and vellum holes, a white
“ satin waistcoat serpentined with
“ gold, black satin breeches, and roses
“ in his shoes; don’t you observe
“ him?”—“ Good God!” cried Tom,
“ how extravagantly he is dressed,
“ he is some fop of fortune I suppose.”—“ Yes,” said Rattle, “ that
“ gentleman is a hair dresser—the
“ lady with him is a milliner. This
“ young man came from Yorkshire,
“ a raw country lad; for some years
“ he

“ he shaved for a penny, and dressed
“ hair à la mode à Paris for twopence.
“ Being out of his time, and some-
“ what above dressing only the skulls
“ of stupid shopmen and prentice
“ boys, he moved from that college
“ of education, Drury Lane, and en-
“ tered another sphere, where his ge-
“ nius could breathe, and his merit
“ find room to expand itself. He
“ soon, by a rapid rise, adorned with
“ powder and pomatum the superior
“ craniums about St. James’s ; dressed
“ the young noblemen at the hotels,
“ and their mistresses at the bag-
“ nio’s.

“ Always furnished with news,
“ and ready at intrigue, he might
“ now be seen darting up Pallmall in
“ his white habit, his powder bag
“ in his hand, and his looks filled
“ with importance—not engaged as

“ you might suppose, in the study of
“ of his profession, but full of an ab-
“ stract science more advantageous—
“ that of conveying billet-doux, mak-
“ ing appointments, &c. this brought
“ him forward; he now set up for
“ himself, and took this lady to live
“ with him.

“ He was now metamorphosed from
“ the country lad with the loose red
“ hair, dirty white coat and greasy
“ breeches, who used to carry the
“ wigs and sweep the shop, to the
“ gentleman friseur, who keeps a
“ large shop in Piccadilly, known by
“ the inscription over it: Pomade
“ and Co. hair dressers to the Prince
“ of Wales.

“ But for all this the great man is
“ not happy, he is now talking about
“ being made a page.” “ And will he
“ ever obtain it,” replied Tom, with

as much earnestness as if his friend was actually possessed of the powers of divination. “No,” returned Mr. Rattle; “the successful rogue is
“near returning in a regular progression to his former state; the
“butterfly will soon be a worm
“again; that green coat is a sure
“prognostic of an approaching decadence;—he rose by being frugal, the position is of course, that
“he must fall by being extravagant;
“the lady, to whom he is cicerone,
“or rather, as it is politely termed,
“flash man, has still charms to attract some visitors to the house of
“her sometimes reputed husband.

“She is always seen about St. James’s, between twelve and four, endeavouring to catch the eye of a certain prince. Alas! her days are
“just over, the creditors will wait no
E 2 “longer;

“ longer ; her business decreases, and
“ her husband can no longer appear
“ in his green coat of a Sunday ; the
“ finale is, he ends his days in the
“ Fleet prison, and she becomes a
“ piazza pedestrian.”

Tom was laughing heartily at the fertility of his friend's imagination, when a genteel man, plainly dressed, passed by ; his thoughts seemed fixed on something far from agreeable, he appeared pale, thin, and dejected, his eyes seemed sunk in his head, and destitute of the fire which success and happiness of mind usually gives that organ. “ I suppose,” said Tom, “ this character is very different from the last.” — “ It is, indeed !” returned Rattle, sighing.

The uncommon manner in which his friend spoke these words, led Tom at first to imagine he was thus serious,

serious, only with an intent to banter ; but he was soon convinced to the contrary, when Mr. Rattle continued, “ that man’s history is briefly
“ thus :—he was cast some time
“ since in an action brought to recover an estate, of which he was
“ the undoubted heir. The prospect he had of being a man of
“ fortune, made him run into expences, which it is now improbable he can ever pay ; Sunday, dedicated to the Being to whom
“ mercy only belongs, is the only day this generous (for his good actions anticipated his fortune) man
“ can dare to walk without danger of being arrested ; he now meditates
“ means to pay his debts, is forming speculations, and is breaking by
“ degrees his honest heart, with fruitless hope, and melancholy
“ fears.

E 3

“ fears. I knew him once, when he
“ was more happy. Poor Charles!
“ when will thy misfortunes end ?”

Some very smart women passed by at this moment, which very seasonably relieved the damp which began to spread even over the spirits of the volatile Rattle.

One lady in particular attracted their notice, “ that girl,” cried Rattle, “ you see with the footmen behind her, was a little time since a milliner in Cranbourn Alley; her beauty and simplicity soon attracted the notice of a nobleman, who married her at a masquerade, where she was en bergere. In a few months, when the young gentleman lays down his greys—sells his stud, and retires to a domestic life, this little thing will be to be sold again, at another running lease.”

“ That

“ That man that shuffles along in
“ an old black coat, and his hair
“ without powder, who seems as if
“ he possessed none of the volatility
“ and giddiness of youth, is a kind
“ of agent, and one of the proudest
“ men in England. His father saved
“ a fortune by a lucrative specula-
“ tion, and the son follows his steps
“ as closely as possible. Though never
“ introduced among the great, he imi-
“ tates from his own contracted
“ ideas their manner, and is always
“ above speaking to any one be-
“ neath him, lest it should take away
“ from the little dignity he assumes.
“ He imagines his fortune can procure
“ him respect and esteem, and from
“ this idea he swells into a little sort
“ of consequence ; he is, besides, the
“ most envious and unhappy being
“ on earth, and turns pale when he

“ hears the success of any one he
“ knows ; he always levels the abilities
“ of his friends, doubts the
“ reality of what they say, and sneers
“ at their hopes and expectations.
“ I hate that fellow,” continued Rattle,
“ he is just such a one as your
“ friend Soapy, I can’t think, damn
“ me,” to Tom, “ how you can be
“ wrapped up in a mean rascal, who
“ would not do a generous action,
“ even to save a brother from a prison.”

Our hero entered rather warmly on the defence of his friend, when he found him thus attacked, and asserted that he had himself received many offers of kindness from him.

Rattle finding Mr. Weston maintained his opinion of his friend, dropped the subject, and entered on another, more agreeable to them both ;
“ Do

“ Do you observe,” said he, “ that
“ lady with a servant behind her, in
“ a blue and red livery. She is one
“ of the greatest ornaments of the
“ great; her family is one of the
“ oldest in England, and their vir-
“ tues have been hereditary—she is
“ herself blessed with one of the best
“ dispositions. Her fortune is a very
“ good one, and would be much bet-
“ ter if her heart was worse. She
“ moves in the sphere of nobility,
“ like a planet surrounded by its sat-
“ tellites, respected and admired.—
“ Her tradesmen try all they can to
“ please her: her little dependants,
“ who can hardly be called so, adore
“ her, and her equals are proud of
“ Her acquaintance: the drawing
“ room and the cottage are the same
“ to her. And perhaps, after having
“ parted with a Duchess, visits some

“ poor tenant’s daughter she has honoured with her protection. She is unmarried, not for want of offers, for she is really handsome, and, besides her fortune is a temptation ; but most likely from the fear of losing the prerogative she has of doing good, and being obliged to give up the pursuits which she is so fond to indulge.”

After Mr. Rattle had finished this high panegyric, he recollected that he had to dine with a member of parliament that day, “ an old friend, just come from the country,” and requested Tom to accompany him, “ I can introduce ye, by G—! will you go ?” Our hero very politely declined the honour—“ where did you say you lived ?” “ In Drury Lane,” returned Weston ; “ Drury Lane ! Oh, damme ! that will never do
“ for

“ for a gentleman ; get another immediately ; a neat first floor, or a second floor, so as it is genteel, and in a good street, where a friend may come and take a breakfast, and keep a fellow, can't ye ? ”

Mr. Weston, who had listened with astonishment at his friend's rhodomontade some time, replied, that it was his intention to change his lodging, but as for keeping a servant, he thought unnecessary. “ Why, to be sure,” returned Rattle, “ I do without myself—I turned my dog away.”

After a few more observations, which I shall spare the reader, and a promise for to breakfast with him the Tuesday morning, Mr. Rattle took his leave.

Our hero in his way home fixed on an apartment at twelve shillings a

E 6

week,

week, somewhere near Bond-street ; and as soon as he returned home, paid Mrs. Acid her rent. The next morning he took possession of his new lodging, which being some distance from Mr. Maclean's, he was obliged to give up boarding with that family, and besides the new scenes of life in which he meant to engage, would not permit him to attend the regularity of their hours.

Thus foolishly did our hero give up a reasonable course of life, for an expensive and ruinous system of extravagance, without even the most slender hopes of being able to maintain appearance a month longer.

Mr. Weston kept his appointment on Tuesday with his friend Rattle, and was astonished at the way in which he appeared to live ; two or three gentlemen were at breakfast with,

with him, whose conversation and manners discovered the height of dissipation they indulged; raillery, wit, and obscenity took their turns, till tired of the length of the dejeuner, they at last proposed a walk, in which our hero was led into all the fashionable expences of the town, and after an idle and useless perambulation returned home to his apartment.

This lodging was very unlike the former our hero occupied. It had been furnished on purpose to let with advantage to some young fellow of fortune. Mrs. Varnish kept a maid entirely to attend the gentlemen in her house, who had only to pay their rent, and in every other respect do just as they pleased.

This liberty was naturally pleasing to Tom; he forgot the prudent Mrs. Maclean

Maclean, and the sober Mrs. Acid, and indulged the idea of lying in bed till twelve o'clock, then breakfasting, reading the papers, &c.

Two or three months elapsed in this unprofitable life, when Mr. Placid's servant brought a message to our hero that his master wished to see him immediately. But as it happened that morning had been dedicated to a ride proposed by Rattle and his friends, so that business was obliged to give way to this engagement, and Tom deferred going till the next day, which the conduct of the preceding evening rendered impossible, as he had a violent headache.

The next week was, however, for business, and Mr. Placid waited on, who informed our hero he had recommended him to a gentlemen in a public

public line, who wanted a secretary ; but as he was upon leaving England immediately, he feared the delay had obliged him to accept another solicitation.

Mr. Weston, who pleaded illness as an excuse, was presented with a letter to the gentleman, and arrived time enough to hear that he had left London the preceding evening.

The little chagrin our hero felt on this occasion was soon done away by the amusements his leisure afforded, and the pleasure of the night compensated sufficiently for the disappointment of the day. Indeed our hero congratulated himself in not being obliged to leave such good friends.

My reader, I dare to say, recollects Mr. Rattle's mentioning to our hero
his

his design to sell his commission; the truth is, it had been done long before, and a regular change taken place in his company, dress, &c. this change began now to appear very visibly. The first rate bucks with whom he associated at White's, had long since dropped his acquaintance, and the lesser order of these gentlemen began to shun their companion, who was now obliged to appear in an old coat, dirty silk stockings; his former situation was forgot, and my dear boy, my dear fellow, &c. passed along unnoticed.

This neglect, however, did not much affect a man of Rattle's ideas, he was content to move in another sphere, and found the same hearty fellows among them. He was, himself, what is called a knowing one, and

and was joyfully received, and much respected in these honourable circles, where Rattle was the constant president. Though no man possessed more excellent ideas, or could appear more the gentleman, he suffered all his talents to lie dormant, and his difficulties coming on increased his lethargy.

Gaming, drinking, &c. debased a mind capable of the most useful and beneficial pursuits, and the manners of a gentleman degenerated into the detestable character of a buck.

He was drunk every night, mentioned it with heroism the next morning, ridiculed the poor creatures who left the room before, and returned triumphant again the next evening to his club.

That the reader may be acquainted with some of the gentlemen, with whom

whom poor Rattle was obliged to
affociate, I shall introduce them ac-
cording to their rank in the next
chapter.

CHAP.

C H A P. XVI.

Rattle introduces our Hero to the club, the disagreeable consequences that follow, by which Tom is led to make some reflections on his situation, and to form a resolution of leaving the Society.

THE promised evening arrived for our hero's installation, when Mr. Rattle called for him at his lodgings about ten o'clock, and they sallied out arm in arm to the house where this assembly was usually held.

Rattle was dressed for this occasion, in a green coat with a black silk cape, very nice silk stockings, with kerseymere waistcoat and breeches, and his

his hair in the fashion ; he was an excellent figure, had all the requisites of a buck, was well received by the ladies, and might occasionally have a lodging gratis.

He no sooner entered the room, than “ damme Rattle !” was echoed from every quarter ; “ waiter, more glasses ;” “ Sam, Sam ! bring us more wine.” Mr. Rattle now introduced his friend, when a general whisper went round the table—shrugs, grins, side looks, and other signs of smocking a stranger were put in practice, sufficient to discountenance the most hardened thief in England.

The first of these respectable gentlemen was Dick Snell, a youth of many accomplishments ; he was very thin and tall, his back measured so much in length, that he was usually called mackeril back ; a term which, though

though I do not understand myself, is certainly proper from the precedents I produce, which were his own companions. He had on corderoy breeches and boots; his waistcoat measured about twelve inches, and his coat, with the pockets behind, nearly reached his heels; his hair was turned up, and the sides combed out; his hat, which was more on the hind part of his head than the fore, had a very high crown, and a large silver buckle in front: the countenance of this young gentleman was of the most hardened kind; his mouth swelled into a sort of contemptuous audacity, and his eyes, which were good, expressed with all the force of that organ the mischief of his heart: Dick was, however, in one or two respects a gentleman, that is, nobody knew how he lived, or where he lived

lived—but every one knew with whom, for all the girls about town afforded in their turns this amiable youth a lodging.

Next him was a little fat man with a round chubby (if I may be allowed the expression) sort of face; his chin hanging in folds over his handkerchief, and his cheek swelling into a Bacchanalian proportion. He had on, I believe, a shabby brown coat, a very fine fringed waistcoat, and black fatten breeches. Mr. Bullock was what they call a jolly dog, sung a good song, talked bawdy, and could rattle the dice with any body, which was his only profession.

Another of the company was Mr. Notice, an attorney's clerk, very well known at Symmond's Inn coffee-house, was always dressed in black, with silk stockings, and a preposterous

rous pair of silver buckles ; his hair dressed with sides of immense dimensions, and covered with a thick layer of violet powder, filled with all the importance of writs, rules, orders, subpoenas, and motions ; he has often been seen entering the room with a side walk, that displayed the briefs ascending from his pocket to his elbow.

In term this pupil of ruin, flush with the clients money, calls for coffee, tea, lemonade, &c. and lounges with all the airs of a man of consequence, till the courts are open, or the judge at chambers.

The reader will excuse me, if I place him for a few minutes among the gentlemen of the law, who frequent Mrs. Blackburn's house.

You may imagine Mr. Notice strolling across the room inquiring for letters,

letters, another like himself swearing about a newspaper—a third copying an order, and a confusion of voices resembling that at Babel.

“That cause comes on, on Monday,” between who, “Giles and Macknegin,” what’s it about? “an assault, and action of battery, Sir, sticks, stones, and staves.” — You see, Sir, our client Mr. Giles, a man of property, a taylor, brings his action against Macknegin, a dirty scoundrel, for assaulting him in the street, and calling him cabbage; damages are laid at one hundred pound—Macknegin pleaded specially to the declaration, and issue was joined accordingly. I sent them notice of trial the 15th, and — “Pray what o’clock is it?” — “so that writ of inquiry is executed—the defendants Sharps plea is not good—“ Allen was nonsuited in that
“business.

“business”—Cummings and Mallet,
“that comes on in the Exchequer;
“then affidavits must be filed—the
“proceedings are certainly irregular,
“I have notice to tax costs”—“What
“have you done with Webb?”—
“Damme, the scoundrel he was go-
“ing to settle without me, so I have
“sent him to the Fleet.”—“Have you
“got the captain yet?”—“No; La-
“ver’s after him; I shall have him in
“the morning.”

It would be well to fix an emblem
over this temple of destruction, the
device might be, Justice and the Law
tearing a heart to pieces between
them.

The next character of any conse-
quence we have to describe, is a
youth of a very genteel appearance,
who had been brought up to medi-
cine; Charles Barlowe, however,
found so little lenity from a father,

in respect to some youthful follies, that he was obliged to seek an asylum here, which was the only place that would receive him. After a little time, the skill he had acquired at billiards, afforded him the means of existence; and he now employed the whole of his hours in looking out for the unwary, and engaging them to play.

Our hero had been seated some time without being able to say a word; the subject of their conversation Tom was not yet qualified to enter on with any credit.

“ Well, Rattle !” exclaimed Dick,
“ did you go home last night with
“ Sal Grosvenor ?—Ah ! your a happy
“ dog, you’re the man for the girls.”
“ —Oh ! damme,” returned Notice,
“ she’s a stale piece, I have known
“ her, damme, these five years.”
“ Lord,

“ Lord, is not that she that goes to
“ the Adam and Eve sometimes ?”
“ —Yes, yes ! a tall thin girl, heavy
“ eyes, wears a habit, and drinks like
“ d——n ; you know her, don’t ye ?
“ —Snell, did you play last night ?”
“ —Yes, by G—, and lost about five
“ guineas, I’d a run of ill luck ; I
“ am determined to give up ; damme,
“ Jim Hustle must cheat.”—“ Why,
“ how do I win ?” cried Rattle,—
“ Why, damme, may be you cheat
“ too.” Here a general laugh ensued, which was interrupted by Snell exclaiming, “ Damme, Barlow, what’s
“ the matter ! you seem cut up.”--“ His
“ taylor’s been with him,” returned
Mr. Bullock ;—“ Damme, that can’t
“ be,” cried Notice, the lawyer’s
clerk, “ for he is nonsuited.

This poor piece of wit produced
another laugh, when Snell proposed

to play a game at cribbage with Barlowe, which was agreed to, and the cards brought; Dick's success was so great that he won (although Charles was a good player) every game.

Our hero, who sat next them, and who paid some attention to their play, observed Snell several times conceal a five and a seven, which he placed very dexterously in the room of the worst card in his hand, at the same time nodding and winking at Tom, who thinking him in jest, smiled, and let the deceit go on.

Charles, after having lost several rubbers, protested that he would play no more, insisting at the same time, that he had not fair play, for he had nearly detected the last shift; "Damn me, Sir," returned Snell, "what do you mean? zounds, did you say I cheated ye?" Charles, who was a meek,

a meek, mild youth, only answered, "No matter what I think, Sir, I shall decline playing;"—"Damme, ye little mean puppy, I'll kick ye down stairs." Charles, who burned with resentment, now laid down the money he had lost, and apologized to the company for leaving them, pleading an appointment elsewhere, in which they very readily acquiesced, and seemed perfectly indifferent about what had happened. Mr. Bullock said he was sure Mr. Snell was too much of a gentleman to cheat; "Damn the puppy!" exclaimed Snell, which was echoed by his friend Notice.

Tom, however, burnt with indignation, now turned to Charles, "Stop Sir, a moment," I have something to say, I wish you to hear; "Will you dare, Sir," to Snell, "to say

“ seriously, you did not impose on
“ your friend ?” — “ What do you say,
“ Sir ?” rather confounded, “ do you
“ dare, Sir, to call yourself a gentle-
“ man ?” — “ Damme, Sir, do you
“ doubt it ?” returned Snell, squaring
at Tom, with all possible science, —
“ Yes ;” replied our hero, not at all
dismayed at the formidable appear-
ance of his opponent, “ and more
“ than that, to tell ye you are a liar
“ and a scoundrel,” at the same time
enforcing his opinion with a blow,
that laid Snell backwards over the
bench on which they sat, and his
legs coming in contact with the ta-
ble, the glasses, tumblers, bowls,
punch, lemons, &c. all mixing in a
kind of chaos, fell with a hideous
crush on the floor, and in their way on
poor Bullock’s fatten breeches, the
deluge of Bacchus, and a bowl of ne-
gus,

gus, mixed with the briefs which were in the lawyer's pocket, the whole company stood silent with astonishment, staring at Tom, who had now permitted his antagonist to rise. Snell immediately pulled off his coat, and challenged our hero to the yard.

The combatants were presently surrounded by a numerous throng of pickpockets, &c. who entered into all the business in a moment. Tom was seconded by his friend Rattle, who began to resent the usage he had met with—and Snell by Notice the attorney's clerk, who, however, advised a different way of settling the affair; as for Bullock he was Bottle-holder, a post he always preferred in these cases.

When Tom renewed the fight, he found he was much inferior to Newgate in science, and received several blows in the first and second round—

when the goddess of pugilism, who, it is said, was a fish woman, observing her young Achilles give way, spread her red fist before him, which, like the shield of Minerva, rendered him invincible; and now finding himself supported, like our ancient heroes, by something supernatural, he levelled a dreadful blow at Snell, which being given with accuracy between those two mirrors, without whose assistance he could do nothing, for it would be wrong to say day-lights, which was the term used on this occasion, closed in darkness those luminaries, and put an end at once to the fray.

Snell now declared he would fight no more—Rattle huzza'd—the young doctor stood staring at Tom—Bullock whistled, and the lawyer whispered

pered his friend, with a sneer, "Egad
"Dick, this action carries costs."

Our hero now insisted on Snell's begging pardon for his behaviour to Barlow, to which the valiant hero submitted, saying, He was sorry, damme, he was only in jest, but he did not like to be brow-beat; you are the first man, Mr. Weston, by G—, who ever — But damme, — No matter.

The company now returned to the table, which had been put in order by the waiter; but harmony had fled, or rather had never been there, and they thought fit to break up very early, heartily sick and tired of each other.

They, however, unanimously pressed Tom to come the next club night, and swore, damme's, they'd have no falling out among friends. Snell

offered his hand, which Tom was too good natured to refuse, and the company parted after a very cordial good night.

Rattle returned home with our hero, more friendly than ever, and parted with him at the door, not to seek his own lodgings, but to visit another society, where he was grand master.

As soon as our hero had seated himself by the fire, he began making some reflections on the company he had left, though mixed by circumstances with such characters, he hated them in his heart, and had sense and virtue enough left to detest the life he had adopted. He now formed a resolution to shun Rattle as much as possible—to enter on a prudent plan, and to amuse himself in studies, which would qualify him for any
post

post his friend might obtain for him—
with this pleasing thought he laid
himself down on his pillow, and per-
haps, by accident only, enjoyed for
once a good night's rest.

F 6

CHAP.

C H A P. XVII.

Containing another adventure in the Park—a very pleasing friendship revived—together with a very melancholy history.

TOM, during the very long and unpleasant vacation he had from business, frequently visited his favourite promenade, St. James's Park, where he always took a book to read, rather to indulge than to divert melancholy.

It was on a summer's evening, such a one as resembled that on which our hero left Northampton, Mr. Weston, taking his usual walk, passed by a young lady, followed by her servant,

vant, whose person he thought he was acquainted with.

When the mind is engaged on any disagreeable subject, it has very little curiosity, and escapes from every thing external to the rooted care that holds possession.

When Mr. Weston had reached the bottom of the Mall, he turned about, and had not walked far before he met the same young lady again, and being less occupied or more curious, looked at her with some attention, but could not analyse her features sufficiently to discover whether he knew her or not; he observed, however, a melancholy complacency in her face, which hurt him exceedingly.

He was nearly convinced in his own mind that he was mistaken; the person he at first imagined it to be

be was far from affluence, and besides very unlikely to visit London.

He, however, determined from a combination of different motives to follow her from the Park, which he did to a very genteel house in Berners street; full of the adventure, he went into a public house at the corner of the street, and inquired who it was lived at number 5, "Who is "it?" returned the publican, who was a great fat man, "Where the "devil's Jack?"—"Pray what is the "lady's name that lives?"—"Here "Jack, take this beer to the taylor's "at number 49—there was a pot "owing last night." He was now rubbing out a score in the bar, when Tom renewed his application, and received for answer, "Them there "two Welch rabbits are wanted in "the parlour."

Tom,

Tom, whose patience was now exhausted, left the man of business to count over his score, and went into a green grocer's next door, where he bought some apples, and stood eating them at the door, while three damsels within and the woman of the house were tasting the pleasures of a long gossip.

One of them had an oil cruet in her hand, another was dabbing a quarter of fresh butter between her fingers, and the third held a mug of small beer—"So then," exclaimed the lady with the beer, "it's a place
"of all work you want?"—"No
"ma'am, ladies maid;"—"Those are
"not so easy to be got," interrupted the lady with the oil cruet, "What,
"Sukey, are you going to leave your
"place?"—"Lord, yes ma'am, I gave
"them warning last Lady Day."—
"What

“What you couldn’t agree;”—“Yes,
“we agreed well enough, but we
“were tired of one another, that’s
“all;”—“You live at squire Allen’s
“don’t ye, Peggy?”—“Yes, at pre-
“sent;”—“That’s a pretty place,”
“I’d be glad to change it, I know
“that, work morning, noon, and
“night—nobody knows the labour I
“go thro’;—why, ma’am, there’s fe-
“ven children to tend, then there’s
“four fires to light, eight beds to
“make, and a fortnight’s wash—no-
“body knows nothing of people’s
“troubles but themselves.”—“Well,
“I’m contented!” exclaimed a good
looking wench, who had just come in
for some ketchup, “to be sure I live
“with a lady.”—“You live at number
“5, don’t ye?”—“Yes, ma’am, with
“Miss Harcourt.” Tom was still
at the door, now heard the name of
his

his incognita. "Ah! the place may
"be easy enough certainly," continued Peggy, "but I should not like to
"live with such trash;"—"Trash!" returned Peggy, "I'd have you to
"know my mistress is a country
"squire's daughter—people talk indeed,"—"Well, you know she is a
"bad woman, and I have too much
"regard for my own character." This lady's character was, however, just
advancing with certain visible symptoms, to live with a w——re. "Oh,
"Miss Dolly," returned Sally, "your
"mistress to be sure is to set us the
"example—and you'll say nothing
"about it in a couple of months; do
"you think you will?"

This sarcasm enraged poor Peggy so much that she could hardly speak, but no sooner did this female blessing return, than she poured torrents of
abuse

abuse on Sally.—“ Ah ! ye huffy, “ ye trollope, you’re beneath my notice;”—“ Beneath you !” exclaimed Sally, turning up her nose, “ ye “ strumpet.” The altercation now grew so high, that Mrs. Runnel was obliged to break up the assembly, and moved that each of them might adjourn to their respective kitchens.

Tom now seized an opportunity to speak to Sally, who was tripping along with the oil cruet in one hand and her gown tucked up with the other, “ Pray, my dear, have you lived long “ with Miss Harcourt ?” which interrogatory Sally answered with a smile, “ Yes, Sir, above a twelvemonth ;” —“ I beg pardon, my dear,” continued our hero, “ but I think I “ know Miss Harcourt, though not “ under that name ;”—“ Very possible, “ Sir, my mistress’s real name is not “ Harcourt,

“Harcourt, that’s Mr. Harcourt’s
“name, the gentleman who lives
“with her—I declare now, I can’t
“recollect what she told me her
“name was.”

Mr. Weston inquired whether she had ever heard her say she came from the country, “Lord, yes Sir, some-
“where about Northamptonshire I
“think.” This part of her intelligence corresponded so well with our hero’s thoughts, that after giving Sally half a crown, and making her promise to deliver a letter, he went to the Cambridge coffee-house, and wrote the following note to Miss Harcourt:

“DEAR MADAM,

“A gentleman who thinks he re-
“members your person, and who saw
“you this morning in the Park,
“begs permission to see you; he is
“from Northampton, and hopes he
“shall

“shall realize a girl he formerly
“knew with pleasure.”

Tom now appeared before the area, and the bribed fille de chambre ascended with her commission.

Miss Harcourt, immediately, on reading it, ordered Sally to shew the gentleman up stairs, and in the meantime, threw herself in the most engaging posture possible on her sofa.

The moment Mr. Weston entered the room she rose, and very politely begged him to be seated, “Sir,” continued Miss Harcourt, “your letter
“informs me you are from North-
“ampton; I do know (sighing) that
“place, but I really do not remem-
“ber you.”—“I believe,” returned Mr. Weston, “I am not so much a
“stranger as you imagine, nor could
“I have thought Harriet Wilkinson
“could so soon forget.”

His

His name was no sooner uttered than the young lady burst into tears, "I find now you do know me, Oh, "Tom!" and sunk into Mr. Weston's arms, who was near half an hour endeavouring to bring her to herself.

After she was a little composed, she took hold of our hero's hand, and pressing it, with great emotion exclaimed,—“ Oh, Mr. Weston! I “ have been, since you saw me, an “ unfortunate girl, and the dear cause “ of all my misfortunes is before “ me.” Tom trembled at this tender accusation, and kept repeating to himself, “ My dear Harriet, for- “ give me, you know not how much “ (though as a friend) I am interest- “ ed in your misfortunes you speak “ of.”

A fresh shower now came from the gentle Harriet's eyes, which washed
away

away at once all her little errors and mistakes, and left her innocent as ever.

To describe this beautiful girl as she now appeared, is indeed a vain attempt; her person had improved very much—her complexion was of the fairest—her blue languishing eye had all the powers of fascination—her lips were ripe and red, and her bosom of the finest formation.

Poor Harriet was voluptuous by nature, and her constitution half her crime.

Our hero did every thing in his power to divert her attention from the thoughts of her situation, and endeavoured to convince her, that Heaven had still in store some future blessings both for him and her.

“No,” returned the gentle Harriet, “I can never be happy; this
2 “ moment,

“ moment, however, approaches to
“ something like it.”

A very tender explanation now took place between Mr. Weston and his fair friend Harriet Wilkinson; the young lady grew more composed, and dinner being introduced, the amiable Harriet did the honours of her little table with all her former address and attention.

Immediately after the cloth was removed and the servants withdrawn, Miss Wilkinson renewed the subject of her misfortune, and unrestrained poured forth her heart to Tom.

“ And now, Mr. Weston,” cried the gentle Harriet, “ I will endeavour
“ to relate my sad history, and first
“ you yourself appear in it as the innocent cause of all my ruin.

“ When we played in farmer
“ Hodgeson’s meadow, happy times!

“ Inno-

“ Innocent were our kisses, and with-
“ out meaning our rustic follies !
“ My little heart has from infancy
“ been environed with affections ; I
“ loved you before I hardly knew
“ the meaning of the name, and have
“ often stood an hour by the Mr.
“ Bowden’s green gate, to watch
“ your coming from school ; I ad-
“ mired then the dangers and per-
“ plexities of love ; a novel was the
“ first book I took in my hand, and a
“ romance my sole delight ; I was a
“ heroine at fourteen, and often
“ melted into consent before I had a
“ lover at my feet—unhappy ten-
“ dency ! dangerous inclinations !
“ When I left Northampton, I found
“ how much involved my poor heart
“ was on your subject, and my re-
“ gret, though unavailing, was cut-
“ ting and sincere.

“ Our

“ Our first love ever makes the
“ deepest impression, and though we
“ may afterwards permit another pas-
“ sion, the first conqueror makes ex-
“ cursions whenever he pleases over
“ his little dominion the heart, and
“ asserts his sovereignty.

“ I had been at my father's new
“ residence about two months, when
“ a Mr. Osborn came there for the
“ shooting season; he was a gentle-
“ man of about thirty years of age,
“ of a very serious and quiet dispo-
“ sition; his manner was the most
“ engaging in the world, and his
“ figure the most elegant I ever saw;
“ he was, besides, master of five or six
“ languages, but above all, skilled in
“ that of love; his understanding
“ was repeatedly sounded in my ears
“ by every one who knew him; and I
“ was every hour convinced of the
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“ superiority he had in that respect
“ over every body else.

“ Women are always proud of being noticed by men of sense, and I
“ was particularly the subject of his
“ conversation: he used to call me
“ his little Eleve—his pupil—his
“ witty Harriet.

“ He remained at my father’s much
“ longer than he at first intended,
“ and we grew every hour more intimate; my mother, who was a
“ good tempered woman, and besides
“ a little proud of her daughter, took
“ no steps to prevent an intimacy
“ which she thought might turn to
“ my advantage.

“ I shall never forget the pleasing
“ lessons Mr. Osborn gave me when
“ we walked out together, ‘ I think,’
“ said he one day, ‘ there is nothing
“ so pleasant to a good mind as a walk;
“ these,

“ these, my dear girl, are rational
“ amusements, and last for ever, while
“ the dissipated only flutter round
“ pleasures attached to cares, and like
“ the moth are at last destroyed in the
“ flame.”

“ If he entered a cottage, all the
“ children were in a moment about
“ him, while the old dame was em-
“ ployed dusting her chairs, and in-
“ viting his honour to sit down.

“ These, (cried Mr. Osborn, taking
“ me by the hand) my dear girl, are
“ my pleasures ; how would they be
“ increased had I a partner to approve
“ —to join in my endeavours to pro-
“ mote happiness.

“ To the pleasing voice of reason,
“ reason herself gives way ; I esteem-
“ ed him and thought of you—I lov-
“ ed you better than him, and him
“ better than any body else. He ad-

“mired and courted me, you neglected and forgot me.

“It was an easy matter for him now to prevail on me to take these walks; my reserve gradually lessened, and the pleasure I found in his company increased in proportion—I was the more compliant, the more ardent I found him, and excused transports which I thought inseparable with love.

“Still, however, I was innocent. I blushed when he pressed my lips, yet wondered why I blushed, and allowed liberties in which I found pleasure, and could not trace a fault.

“Some time had elapsed in a course of uninterrupted domestic happiness, when Mr. Osborn, one day, after having studiously obtained from many of my unguarded
“ed

“ ed expreffions, how much a victor
“ he was over my heart, began to ad-
“ drefs me more ferioufly upon the
“ fubject of our love than I ever heard
“ him before. My dear, faid he,
“ you are a reasonable girl, and are
“ poffeffed of too much generofity
“ to doubt of what I am going to
“ fay ; you know I have always re-
“ prefented my father’s difpofition to
“ be proud and tenacious ; and though,
“ my dear Harriet, you are lovelinefs
“ itfelf, from worldly motives he
“ would reject you, and though I en-
“ joy fome part of my fortune, yet
“ the remainder, which is the prin-
“ cipal, I can only have from my
“ compliance with his will—do not
“ be alarmed, my dear little friend, it
“ is only a fmall obftacle that inter-
“ cepts us. Let me make you mine
“ without him—by ftratagem mine !

“ and let us lose the reflection of our
“ friend’s displeasure in all the luxu-
“ ries of love, in sweet domestic hap-
“ piness, and in the pleasures our
“ reasonable wishes will afford us.

“ I have an aunt, who in a little
“ time will be able to conciliate my
“ father to his amiable daughter, and
“ make him proud to take her by the
“ hand; but, my dear girl, I dare not
“ trust your father with this secret—
“ men are by nature suspicious, and
“ he might doubt a sincerity, you, my
“ dear, cannot doubt. I have been in-
“ clined to mention it to your mo-
“ ther, but her good nature and na-
“ tural frankness would not let her pre-
“ serve in silence even for a short time,
“ a subject which she would think in
“ no danger by being known to her
“ husband. You have, I am sure,
“ seen enough to think different—
“ your

“ your father’s profession is filled with
“ doubts and suspicions, and natural-
“ ly seeks security.

“ Now, my little Harriet, my dear
“ brilliant, witty, spirited girl, can
“ you indulge for a little time a ro-
“ mance—do you think you can have
“ courage to be the heroine? The mo-
“ ment we arrive in town, we will
“ end the frolic in all the serious laws
“ of matrimony.

“ Alas! he had often heard me say,
“ I should like an elopement of all
“ things in the world, however jest
“ might be mixed in those words,
“ they appeared now a check upon
“ reserve.

“ My maid, who knew my secrets,
“ and to whom I listened as an ora-
“ cle, could see no great danger in a
“ trip to Gretna Green, and related a
“ thousand stories to establish her

“ opinion, and always concluded
“ with a destructive sentence that
“ still vibrates on my ear—Lord
“ ma’am, the most happy marriages
“ in the world are these.—Women
“ are the most certain, successful, and
“ ingenious authors of female ruin !

“ To be short, the moment arrived
“ when I granted my consent, and at
“ the same instant accused myself of
“ disobedience—novels were my re-
“ source, and a romance my prece-
“ dent. The postchaise being ready
“ at the gate in the dusk of the even-
“ ing, your poor Harriet yielded to
“ persuasion, and gave up in one
“ detested moment, honour, peace,
“ and happiness. But Heaven now
“ thought fit to check the spirit of
“ adventure, and the cool voice of
“ reason damped at once the courage
“ of your fancied heroine.

“ I be-

“ I believe such of my sex as have
“ experienced an instance like this
“ romantic folly, will own ingenu-
“ ously they never found the pleasure
“ they expected, but, on the contrary,
“ immediate remorse, and unavailing
“ regret. Perverse accidents served
“ now to sink my spirits and bring
“ conscious truth before me. The
“ mail coach in passing us endangered
“ our wheel so much, that we were
“ obliged to get out till it was ex-
“ amined; a chaise appeared now at a
“ distance, coming on with such
“ swiftness, that Mr. Osborn imme-
“ diately suspected a pursuit, and in
“ the agitation he was in, begged me
“ (for it was at Stoke Golding this
“ accident happened) to step into a
“ small public house in the village
“ with his servant, while he saw
“ about the chaise.

“But before I could get to the
“house, I heard the other carriage
“stop, and a parley ensue. Judge
“my alarm, my terrors, my fears!
“Covered up in a veil, I entered a
“little room, filled, I believe, with
“company, from the many voices
“I heard—one who was the most
“affiduous, and procured me some
“water to drink, appeared familiar
“to my ear.”

“Yes,” interrupted our hero,
“and it was familiar. Could I have
“imagined my dear Harriet con-
“cerned in the adventures of that
“evening.”

“Oh Mr. Weston!” continued
Miss Harriet, “would you not
“have protected your Harriet from
“the ruin to which she was haf-
“tening—I am sure you would!
“In a few minutes, however, Mr.
“Osborn

“ Osborn came with the chaise to
“ the door, (which circumstance you
“ will recollect) and informed me
“ after we were in the carriage, that
“ the chaise which came up to us
“ were in pursuit of a young lady,
“ but of a very different name, and
“ that they were gone on, and find-
“ ing his wheel less injured than he
“ imagined, he thought it best to
“ drive on to the next stage.

“ Mr. Osborn’s behaviour during
“ the whole journey, was the most
“ kind, attentive, and respectful in the
“ the world. Early in the morning
“ we arrived at an elegant house in
“ Charlotte street, where he introdu-
“ ced me to a genteel elderly woman,
“ his aunt, who he said, was acquaint-
“ ed with our affair—this lady be-
“ haved in so kind, so motherly

“ a way, that it got something the
“ better of my melancholy.

“ A week past, during which time
“ Mr. Osborn behaved with the
“ greatest respect and attention, fre-
“ quently though repeating his dis-
“ appointment in not having yet ob-
“ tained a licence.

“ Among other parties of pleasure,
“ the masquerade was one day pro-
“ posed, and after persuasion I agreed
“ to accompany Mrs. Osborn, though
“ my mind was far from easy. I
“ reflected every moment on the
“ distraction my family was in on
“ my account, and however I aim'd
“ at dissipation, found it unequal to
“ the task of oblivion.

“ The evening came, and my lit-
“ tle heart palpitated with pleasure;
“ the hair-dresser was sent for, and all
“ my maids employed in making
“ me

“ me appear to advantage—at last your
“ Harriet set off for the masquerade,
“ en bergere.

“ We alighted at the Pantheon,
“ and, I confess, I had no sooner en-
“ tered the room, than I felt the
“ strong impulse of pleasure making
“ its way to my heart; the grandeur
“ of the rooms, the number of masks,
“ and the idea I formed of my own
“ appearance, (for women, Mr. Wes-
“ ton, are always vain) occupied me
“ so agreeably, that I at once forgot
“ the tears of a distracted mother, and
“ an offended father. I had tripped
“ along the rooms among other shep-
“ herdesses like myself, and was en-
“ gaged in observing an old Jew
“ amusing a fair Gentile in Hebrew,
“ I perceived I had lost my chaperon;
“ a harlequin at this moment came
“ up, and encircling my waist, flew
“ with

“ with me in a moment round the
“ room—a waggoner made love to me
“ in the most refined language, and
“ a devil offered me any assistance in
“ his power—the delirium increased,
“ my bosom panted, and my heart
“ beat—every idea was wrapped up
“ in pleasure, and I was insensible of
“ any thing else.

“ A mask now addressed me, who
“ by his voice I found it to be Mr.
“ Osborn, he afforded me some re-
“ freshment, and led me to an alcove,
“ where I listened to the most bril-
“ liant conversation that ever fell
“ from the mouth of man—he was
“ no longer the mild, the serious
“ Mr. Osborn, gaiety, passion, ex-
“ pression, were painted in his coun-
“ tenance; he pressed my hand, pla-
“ ced it to his heart, then entered on
“ the subject of love—swore he
“ could

“ could never be happy without me ;
“ praised my neck, my shape, and
“ dwelt on ideas too luxurious for a
“ girl to listen to, making use of those
“ dangerous words called double en-
“ tendre—alas ! too easily explained ;
“ and calling to his assistance all the
“ poetical powers of seduction.

“ We soon after rose and searched
“ the rooms in vain for our compa-
“ nion ; Mr. Osborn offering me his
“ protection, asserting very boldly,
“ that some accident had compelled
“ his aunt to go home, and we
“ should find her there before us.

“ The protection men afford us, is
“ our ruin. The generous confi-
“ dence I placed in him, permitted
“ every warmth of friendship, allow-
“ ed the kifs, and approved the pas-
“ sion—drowned in pleasure, my
“ beating heart exulted in the mo-
“ ment,

“ ment, and I was ruined ere a step
“ was made against my honour; my
“ seducer perceived his victory, and
“ led me with triumph to the cha-
“ riot, when the servant informed us,
“ Mrs. Osborn had returned home
“ ill, the doctor had just left her, and
“ begged she might not be disturbed
“ if asleep. I was obliged to submit
“ to the reasons that prevented my
“ going to her, and after a tender
“ adieu from Mr. Osborn, retired to
“ my own bed. The maid who un-
“ dressed me, who had studied her
“ lesson to advantage, began with
“ those dangerous praises that are
“ ever sure to be listened to by wo-
“ men, enlarging on the beauties of
“ my person, and pronouncing Mr.
“ Osborn to be the happiest of men,
“ Lord, ma’am! exclaimed the in-
“ genious Anna, what would he give,
“ to

“ to see you now; he’d resign the
“ world I am sure to be an hour in
“ this bedchamber. These foolish ex-
“ pressions had their effect, and I be-
“ gan, (dangerous moment!) to think
“ —good God! if he should come in-
“ to the room, like Archer, or be at
“ my bed side like—what should I do?
“ —I now began studying the de-
“ fence, because (and I can open all
“ my heart to you, Mr. Weston) I
“ longed for the danger. Romance
“ afforded me virtuous examples,
“ and novels the best of precedents;
“ they throw their heroines into situa-
“ tions natural enough, but extreme-
“ ly unnatural are the measures they
“ find to get them out; they only
“ serve to make us taste a poison they
“ have not power to expel.

“ My maid now left me, and I
“ was occupied reading a novel which
“ was

“ was placed, I suppose, designedly on
“ my toilet, when Mr. Osborn rush-
“ ed into the room, exclaiming, My
“ dear girl ! the house is on fire. He
“ run immediately to the bed, and
“ took me in his arms, and in that
“ action used liberties the situation
“ only could excuse ; he flew with me
“ to the stair-case, when his servant
“ called out as loud as he could, Don’t
“ be frightened, Sir, it is all out ; it
“ was only Betty’s candle fell down
“ on some linnen. Good God ! said
“ Mr. Osborn, what a preservation,
“ the house was actually in flames—
“ thank God, my aunt was not dis-
“ turbed ; my dear girl don’t be
“ frightened—I begged him now to
“ leave me, for he was again in my
“ bedchamber. My dear Harriet, con-
“ tinued he, smiling, I cannot leave
“ you till I have quieted your alarms ;
“ I think

“ I think you had better accept of
“ my protection all night. Good
“ God, Sir ! what do you mean ? was
“ the only answer I had power to
“ make him.—My Harriet, continued
“ he, do not let the ridiculous scru-
“ ples of the world, govern that su-
“ perior educated mind—you know,
“ to-morrow morning fixes us for ever
“ in the happy state of matrimony—to-
“ night should we be guilty to taste
“ those pleasures, that will only make
“ us seal the contract with the greater
“ joy—to-morrow my fair philoso-
“ pher must yield to reasons such as
“ these, and excuse the transports of
“ a man placed by accident in your
“ bedchamber, and dying at your feet.
“ Romance, well introduced ro-
“ mance, covered the heinousness
“ of my crime, and I fell an easy prey
“ to the powers of seduction.

“ The

“The morning came, and the
“bright sun reflected on my blushes;
“with day reason returned, the
“pleasure fled, doubt succeeded, and
“conscious guilt remained. Mr.
“Osborn rose, and we breakfasted
“together, without seeing any thing
“of his aunt. My dear girl, said he,
“my aunt is not yet awake, we must
“breakfast by ourselves—Oh, my
“Harriet, if you knew how much I
“esteem you for the generous reli-
“ance you have placed on my ho-
“nour, but this night that little bo-
“som shall be made amends, and
“Miss Wilkinson shall be the happy
“wife of the happy Osborn! My fears
“fled at his language, and I indulged
“a second dream. I waited on Mrs.
“Osborn as soon as she awoke, and
“found her to appearance very un-
“well, so much so, that she said the
“doctor

“ doctor had insisted on her going a
“ few days in the country. Do not
“ be afraid, my dear, cried this art-
“ ful woman, you shall remain here
“ the mistress of my house, and as for
“ Mr. Osborn, he must take a lodg-
“ ing somewhere.

“ At dinner Mr. Osborn returned,
“ and with a great deal of seeming
“ pleasure assured me he should get a
“ licence the next morning. It was
“ too late to reject the advances he
“ made—at night, I had nothing to
“ depend on but his honour, and like
“ a trembling lamb went again to the
“ sacrifice ; I had no friend to whom
“ I could express my fears, and was
“ alarmed for fear Mrs. Osborn
“ should discover my confusion ; in-
“ deed I had no occasion to fear, that
“ wretch was removed the next day
“ to the country, and I was left alone
“ to

“ to bear the torment of reflection :
“ nothing, however, could persuade
“ me to write to my dear father, ex-
“ plain my situation, and ask his pro-
“ tection ; I was too proud to return,
“ and too foolish not to indulge even
“ then some hopes.

“ Mr. Osborn, whenever he found
“ my spirits low, amused me with the
“ plan he meant to pursue, as soon as
“ we were married ; the œconomy
“ he should adopt in his house, and the
“ pleasure he should now indulge,
“ superior to those of celibacy, and
“ with a parade of falsehood, flattered
“ me into peace again. He had now
“ a new tale, which was, that matters
“ were so near accommodated be-
“ tween him and his uncle, through
“ the mediation of his aunt, who
“ had mentioned his affection for a
“ a young lady of Northampton—
“ that

“ that we might have soon a public
“ wedding.

“ But these well imagined stories
“ gradually ceased, and he began
“ only to appear chagrined when
“ I mentioned marriage; he had now
“ taken a lodging for me a little way
“ from town, alledging as an excuse,
“ that his income would not allow
“ him to keep a house; melancholy
“ now got the better of natural dis-
“ position, my health left me—the
“ colour retreated from my cheeks,
“ and shame, anguish, and remorse,
“ filled my discontented bosom.
“ Some months elapsed in this way,
“ during which time I seldom up-
“ braided Mr. Osborn for his unge-
“ nerous conduct, and fought only to
“ engage his affection to do me jus-
“ tice; he indeed still remained kind
“ as ever, except when I introduced

“ any thing relative to our marriage,
“ and then always turned the con-
“ versation towards something else.

“ One day, after having waited
“ some time for him to return to
“ dinner, I received a letter inclosed
“ in a cover, directed to Miss Wil-
“ kinson; my agitation was so great
“ when I run over the following con-
“ tents, that I nearly sunk on the
“ floor:

“ MADAM,

“ Your conduct towards a man
“ who would have married you, can
“ excuse the manner, in which I find-
“ myself obliged to act : as, however,
“ I shall never personally accuse you
“ of your folly, so I rest in silence
“ for ever, Madam,

“ Your humble servant,

“ GEORGE OSBORN.

“ Too

“ Too soon I saw the motive, and
“ I yielded in a flood of tears to my
“ fate—I walked about the room
“ like a mad woman for almost three
“ hours, and was gazing on the busy
“ multitude passing by my window,
“ when I saw my father—Oh ! Mr.
“ Weston, had my voice had power
“ to reach his ear, I should now have
“ called to him ; but I was incapable,
“ my words left me, and almost de-
“ prived of sense I exclaimed, “ My
“ dear father, where are you ! per-
“ haps now you seek your wretched
“ daughter”—here she is, no secret be
“ my shame for ever ! nor shall the
“ story be told till the heart of your
“ Harriet is wasted away in unavail-
“ ing sorrow ! and then the body of
“ your girl shall be conveyed to fight
“ a peace offering for her fault :—thus,
“ Mr. Weston, did I rave. But to re-
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“ late my distress only acts it over
“ again; I fell ill in consequence of
“ the weight of oppression on my
“ mind, and continued so for two
“ months, at the end of which time,
“ I found the little money I had,
“ nearly exhausted; I had no person
“ but the maid to speak to, who was
“ a stranger, for Mr. Osborn thought
“ proper to dismiss my own, on the
“ pretence of her knowing our af-
“ fairs. My landlady threatened me
“ very much about my rent, insinua-
“ ting that as Mr. Osborn had done
“ with me, I should think of other
“ means of getting money: but how-
“ ever Mr. Weston, I may have fell,
“ and though the world would not
“ believe me, yet sooner than suffer
“ prostitution I would have done any
“ thing; some days, however, passed
“ on without my being possessed of a
“ half-

“ halfpenny of money, and I was now
“ obliged to part with a gold watch,
“ and sent the girl, desiring her to sell
“ it to the best advantage, or to
“ pledge it at a pawnbroker’s—she,
“ however, returned no more.—Good
“ God! what did your poor deserted
“ Harriet suffer at this moment?
“ without a friend, without even a
“ common acquaintance to speak to,
“ I dragged through a space of time
“ I remember with horror: at last my
“ landlady, tired with application for
“ money, and imagining Mr. Osborn
“ would pay the debt sooner than
“ let me suffer imprisonment, placed
“ the business in an attorney’s hands,
“ and one evening your poor Harriet
“ was hurried from her tea to a
“ spunging-house in Carey street: I
“ entreated the bailiff to let me see
“ Mrs. Palmer the landlady, and
H 2 “ begged

“ begged she might be sent for—this
“ lady, however, declined coming to
“ the house, for she was purposely
“ out when I was arrested, and sent
“ word that some of my gentlemen
“ must pay it; but little as the sum
“ was, which was only the arrears af-
“ ter Mr. Osborn left me, for he had
“ paid, up till then, I had no way
“ whatever of settling it, without
“ throwing myself on the mercy of
“ my friends, which could I have
“ got any other person to have wrote,
“ I should now have done.

“ Among the company at the
“ spunging house there was a young
“ gentleman; whose mildness of coun-
“ tenance, and apparent good nature,
“ made me observe him more parti-
“ cularly than the rest; he fixed from
“ the first moment his eyes on mine,
“ and mixed in the conversation of
“ those

“ those expressive organs, a language
“ full of pity and esteem—he parti-
“ cularly engaged himself on my
“ part, and drew from me, by the
“ polite attention he used, a part of
“ my history: the unfortunate feel a
“ kind of relief if they can impart,
“ even to any one who will listen to
“ them, the subject of their distress.”
“ Madam,” said he, when I had
“ done, in a low voice, you say you
“ have not a friend in the world, I
“ dare not deny that charge, because
“ every action of a stranger must ap-
“ pear interested; my mind, however,
“ has suffered too much, to be struck
“ even at the assemblage of beauties
“ you possess; it is the gentleness of
“ your manner most attracts, and
“ sympathy informs me you have a
“ heart susceptible of every tender
“ passion;—from your ambiguous
H 3 “ story,

“ story, I can trace a cruel cause, a
“ just resentment burns in your bo-
“ som, and love, the former possessor
“ of that abode, is almost now ex-
“ tinct. But you see before you
“ a young man, whose heart, edu-
“ cated in misfortune, can in-
“ terest itself in any subject of dis-
“ tress; the most early part of my
“ youth was engaged in love, and
“ my hours devoted to the company
“ of a charming girl, who lives yet
“ to my remembrance, in all the
“ strength of colouring regret affords
“ the imagination—Poor Eleanor !
“ three years passed on, ripening the
“ tender passion we indulged, and
“ strengthening our esteem ; when,
“ just as we had obtained the mutual
“ consent of our friends to marry,
“ that generous girl fell a sacrifice to
“ the most cruel of all disorders, a
“ de-

“ decline, and drooping by degrees,
“ gave me time to anticipate the
“ worst of misfortunes, and call phi-
“ losophy to my assistance. Soon
“ after her death, a father, a mother,
“ and a sister followed; I now found
“ myself possessed of a competency
“ that only gave me leisure to be
“ miserable! My heart, however,
“ softened by its sorrows, seeks its
“ companions in every scene of mise-
“ ry; among my other occupations,
“ visiting these regions of calamity is
“ a principal one, nor can I feel more
“ satisfaction for the employment I
“ have chosen, than when I recollect
“ the opportunity it has given me of
“ being acquainted with the most
“ amiable of women.

“ During this conversation, we
“ were very little attended to by the
“ rest of the company, who appeared

“ all of them too disagreeably em-
“ ployed to listen to others. Mr.
“ Vincent, for that was this gentle-
“ man’s name, had several confe-
“ rences with the sheriffs officer,
“ which I soon perceived was on my
“ subject, as he immediately after
“ begged me not to be alarmed, but
“ that it was impossible any thing
“ could be done for me till the next
“ day. Mr. Hodson will shew you all
“ the attention in his power, and in
“ the morning, if you will allow me
“ the honour to breakfast with you,
“ I shall think it the greatest of fa-
“ vours.

“ Whatever my thoughts at this time
“ might have been, I found myself
“ too dejected, too much deserted not
“ to accept even with pleasure his
“ company.

“ The

“ The word was at last given to
“ lock up ; judge now the horrors of
“ my situation ; in a room by myself,
“ the windows barred, the doors
“ bolted, and a thousand fears rushing
“ on my mind ; nor could sleep ap-
“ proach a pillow which had so long
“ been destined to receive only the
“ unavailing tears of the unfortunate.

“ When I came down in the morn-
“ ing, Mr. Vincent received me, and
“ taking my hand, led me into the
“ parlour. My fair prisoner, said he,
“ in a few moments you are at li-
“ berty ; do not be angry with me
“ for what I have done, I ask no re-
“ compence, but your friendship,
“ accept my protection.

“ You shall be placed immedi-
“ ately where you like, your own ser-
“ vants shall attend you, nor imagine
“ that I have those interested views

“ that actuate the minds of men in
“ general.—No; though you are
“ beautiful as an angel, though that
“ mind possesses every virtue, and
“ that person every accomplishment,
“ still (since I can never marry) I ask
“ only your esteem, your confidence,
“ be my companion.”

“ I freely own, Mr. Weston, this
“ language prevailed; nay, more,
“ since my heart is open to you al-
“ ready, I must add, that after a gra-
“ dual increase of esteem, I granted of
“ my self a farther recompence. It
“ is with this gentleman I live at pre-
“ sent; but the pleasure, the almost
“ equal pleasure of a legal tye are
“ nearly broke. Mr. Vincent’s ill
“ state of health threatens me every
“ day with another misfortune; he is
“ now at Richmond, at a friend’s
“ house, trying the effects of the
“ country

“country air; but a letter he has
“sent this morning, informs me he
“means to be in London again to-
“morrow.”

I need not observe, that our hero was sensibly affected with the open and candid manner in which Miss Wilkinson owned all her little foibles and related her history, nor do I doubt but the reader joins in lamenting the misfortune of a poor deserted girl, whose only crime was too much love, and whose strength was not equal to the powers of seduction.

C H A P. XVI.

Containing some particulars which relate to a former part of this history.

—An entertainment Mr. Weston gives his friends, and the unexpected arrival of parson Bowden; and something besides.

PERHAPS some apology is necessary to our reader for having so long neglected making mention of the charming daughter of Sir Julius Acton; we can only inform him, that this young lady was tasting the pleasures of a retirement in the country, during which a regular correspondence was kept up between the lovers.

Our

Our hero had, besides, several other employments, of which (owing to the renewal of his intimacy with his friend Rattle) the gaming table was the principal.

Mr. Weston soon entered into the passion of play, and began already to experience those rapid changes of fortune which lead on the desperate, and amuse to the last with prospects of fortune that shift with every deal.

The success Mr. Weston had first met with, now began to leave him, and sensible decrease of specie appeared, though the purse was scarcely ever examined, while it afforded the chink of a few guineas ; as it was, however, his turn to give a treat at his lodgings to some of the bons vivants of his acquaintance, it occasioned an inquiry into the state of his finances ; poor Tom could not
account

account how so much money had gone ; “ five guineas only left ! it cannot be ; I have certainly mis-
“ took ; only five guineas ! ” But as a calculation was too much trouble, or too disagreeable a task from other motives to enter on, Mr. Weston contented himself with observing, “ Well, it cannot be helped,” or something to that purport ; and, indeed, he placed so much reliance on his friend Soapy’s assistance in case he needed it, that he felt very little concern at the lowness of his pocket.

Rattle, who had now run out the whole of his own money, very often obliged Tom with disposing of a little of his, and came constantly two or three times a week with his usual address, “ Egad, I want some money, “ my boy ; ” which our generous youth, however embarrassed, immediately

diately advanced, while the elated Rattle swore, "Damme, you're a "good fellow, by G—d," always promising to return it in a day or two, which promise he both forgot, and put out of his power before night.

Our hero spent a whole day in the expensive arrangements he had to make for the reception of his guests. Seven o'clock in the evening had arrived, the rooms were lighted up, the side-board filled with wine, sherbet, negus, &c. and the card-tables placed, when Mr. Weston, who was in silent expectation of his visitors, heard a knock at the door, and was astonished when he saw Mr. Bowden walking up the stairs.

Our hero's confusion was so great that he could hardly speak to him, till the old gentleman shook him by the
the

the hand with all the warmth of affection, gazing with astonishment at the elegance of the apartments, and the change in Mr. Weston's dress.—
“My dear boy,” said he, what! so
“you have got some great post al-
“ready—Mr. Placid, I suppose, has
“——What, is this your apart-
“ment?”—Yes, Sir, it—t—i—
“i—s.”—“But, Tom, take away
“these things (the cards) for the
“present, and let you and I have a
“little rational conversation.”——
“Conversation,” answered our hero,
“why, half the world is coming
“here; I am going to have com-
“pany;”—“So much the worse,
“child,” returned Mr. Bowden, look-
ing at the cards, “there is nothing
“so bad as bad company.”—“They
“are gentlemen by fortune,” return-
ed Tom, with some warmth, “and
“have

“ have connections that will one day
“ or other do me some service.”—
“ My dear child,” returned Mr. Bow-
den, with a smile Tom had often
been used to, “ do not be angry with
“ me ; if they are only your young
“ friends who come here to pass away
“ an hour cheerfully, I am as much
“ an advocate for mirth as they,
“ and if they are not any of those
“ wretched rakes who infest this
“ town, I will, for once, be young
“ again, or, at least, as agreeable as
“ an old fellow can ; I’ll divest my-
“ self of all old formal sayings, sup-
“ press pedantry, and be as sociable
“ as possible. So, if you’ll give me
“ leave, I’ll make one of the party,
“ for I am come on purpose to see
“ you, and I won’t be disappointed.”

Mr. Weston was too good to ex-
press the least coolness at the mal-à-
propos

propos visit Mr. Bowden designed him (though in his heart he wished it had been at any other time. “Indeed, Sir,” cried he, “this is “the last expence of the kind I shall “enter into; my company is such “as I wish to change—But I have “been, since I saw you, unfortun- “nately led to——”——“Why, “Tom,” interrupted Mr. Bowden, “I am prepared for what you are “going to say, and I believe every “word before I hear it. I knew I “had the power to engage (not ex- “tort) a confession from my poor “boy, who, I am certain, never can “like the life he has entered into, “for I am acquainted with all your “steps.

“It is absolutely necessary to a “man’s future happiness that he “should have been one day a dupe, “a fool

“ a fool, and that he should have
“ felt distress; you’ll perhaps think
“ me harsh, but this is really the
“ case.

“ And now, my dear boy, I am
“ come to extricate you from the
“ ruinous pleasures in which I hear
“ you are involved, and to offer you
“ the means of producing so good a
“ change.

“ It is the medicine only being dis-
“ agreeable that makes the patient
“ remain ill after a cure is offered
“ him; but the recipe I am going to
“ advise, is the most pleasant in the
“ whole materia medica, and it is
“ simply this; do not oppose an in-
“ clination towards pleasure with a
“ rigid, monkish forbearance, or with
“ any of the desperate resolutions of
“ desperate minds. Every one knows
“ it is impossible to stop a spirited
“ horse

“ horse at once, he must be checked
“ gradually, and broke in by degrees;
“ the only way for you thoroughly
“ to nauseate the follies that engage
“ you now, is to place against them
“ virtuous pleasures. A marriage
“ where love and reason unites, is the
“ height of human felicity; this
“ single step rids us at once of half
“ our bad inclinations. To be do-
“ mestic is the only certain way to ex-
“ clude unreasonable wishes.” Our
hero was enraptured with this part of
Mr. Bowden’s lecture; he pictured to
himself the pleasures of possessing a
woman like Miss Acton, and drew a
very natural analogy between that
happy moment, and the good clergy-
man’s description of domestic life.

“ It is then,” continued Mr. Bow-
den, “ you will prefer the pleasure
“ of an evening walk, such as your
“ poor

“ poor mother took, with her you
“ love, to what is called a jolly meet-
“ ing. It is then you will give up
“ the useless and ruinous amuse-
“ ments of the town, shun the ta-
“ vern, desert the gaming table,
“ throw your dice away, and fly
“ from the company you now ex-
“ pect.”

At this instant, several loud knocks announced the approach of the party, and Mr. Bowden concluded his lecture with observing to Tom, that he wished him that evening to enjoy all the pleasures the meeting his friends could afford. “ Do not poi-
“ son,” said he, “ the satisfaction of
“ the moment; it is that which makes
“ us hate reason so much, because
“ our friends unskilfully prescribe it
“ us in the height of the distemper.
“ To drink when in a violent heat,
“ natu-

“naturally produces a fever; so to re-
“flect in the midst of pleasure, only
“occasions a phrenzy; to be cool in
“both cases is best; so, my boy, to-
“night, be gay and jocund, merry
“and wise.”

Mr. Weston was shaking his old master by the hand, when Mr. Snell entered the room; “Damme, Tom, “Sal parted with us at the door--hum! “I beg pardon, Sir,” to Mr. Bowden. This gentleman was followed by Notice, Bullock, &c. who all stared at the good old curate, with an effrontery that would have discountenanced either a Chinese merchant or an English attorney.

Mr. Snell, as soon they entered, whispered his friend Notice; “Damme, smother the parson!” and was taking him off, as they call it, from head to foot, when Mr. Bowden, with his

natural politeness addressed himself to the company : “ Gentlemen, I am
“ come to see my pupil, to make
“ him happy, and not to damp his
“ pleasures or that of his friends; as
“ by your looks I imagine you are
“ led to think; I shall, however, soon
“ leave you to enjoy yourselves as
“ you like, and rid you of a restraint
“ that may be disagreeable.”—“ Dam-
“ me,” whispered Bullock, “ a hearty
“ old cock;”—“ He keeps true to
“ his text,” returned Snell; “ he
“ leaves no wine in the old bottles :”
part of these imagined witticisms
were conveyed in a pretty loud whis-
per, with a side laugh to our hero,
who, to use a very common expres-
sion, had sat upon thorns ever since
the entrance of his companions, and
wished the good clergyman either at
North-

Northampton, or his friends at the devil.

A knock was now heard at the door, which came very opportunely to relieve Mr. Weston from the disagreeable dilemma in which he found himself placed by the ill manners of his associates: it was Mr. Rattle, who entered amidst the acclamations of every one present; but the moment this young man saw Mr. Bowden, without taking the least notice of any other person, he run to him, and kneeling down, took his old master's hand, and bathed it (to the astonishment of the bucks who surrounded him) with the tears of gratitude, veneration, and love!

The good clergyman could not suppress his tears, when he recollected the situation into which he now

saw both his children plunged; but he felt most for poor Rattle, whose volatile disposition laid him open for ever a victim to dissipation and unpremeditated vice.

Mr. Bowden, although very much pressed by his young friends to stay the evening, took his leave of the company, and went away very much pleased with Rattle, repeating to himself all the way down stairs, “That boy Harry has a good heart in spite of all his follies!”

The moment the good curate had left the room, a general buz ensued. “Damme, if I did not think” exclaimed Snell, “the old codger was going to give us a sermon!”—“Rattle would make a damn’d good clerk,” returned Bullock and Notice together;—when Mr. Rattle, whose ear had caught with all the

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quickness and tenacity of a friend the insult offered to his old master, addressed his associates in a language they little expected from him ; “ I desire, Mr. Notice, Mr. Bullock, all of you immediately to desist from this conversation ; you are so much beneath the man you ridicule, that it is an insult to common sense to hear you ; nor will I patiently suffer (however connected I may be myself with profligacy) the most generous virtues to become the sport of vice !”

A general silence followed till the cards were introduced, and tricks, honours, trumps, &c. afforded them another subject of conversation. The punch and wine were now placed on the table, and a regular debauch begun, which after supper seemed to restore (if not the harmony) at least

the spirits of the guests. Rattle now began to dance about the room, and after certain gradations every one seemed alike to find the effects of the divine liquor; Notice presently was laid under the table, Bullock occupied a couple of chairs, and our hero, after breaking three or four tumblers, fell fast asleep on the floor.

At last, the fair Aurora appearing at the window of the room, unsealed the eyes of the lawyer's clerk, who recollected he must be at office at eight o'clock, and with a sort of cruel malice awakened all the rest of the company, taking Bullock by the nose, and twisting Snell's long ears, till they were both perfectly sensible it was morning; at last this respectable gang sallied home to their respective lodgings.

Mr. Weston, however, suffered most by the folly of the night; a violent fever was the consequence of his debauch; a doctor was obliged to be sent for, who pronounced him to be in imminent danger, and Mr. Bowden, who attended him every day, began to think very seriously of his situation. At last the fever abated, but a weakness remained, which time only could remove; thus unfit for business or amusement, our hero had leisure to reflect on his pillow, and view, with a despairing eye, the approach of ruin. Mr. Bowden had left London—his friend, Admiral Graplin's arrival in town, was uncertain; no news from Mr. Placid, and the last guinea changed; in short, the black prospect came nearer and nearer. When a letter came one morning, which, by the superscription, appeared

ed to be from Miss Acton.—Mr. Weston, who was all impatience, opened it in bed, and read as follows :

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I must own ingenuously, the mo-
“ ment I was told of your illness,
“ a pain, only natural to friendship,
“ found its way to my heart; and
“ was removed the moment I heard
“ you were better. Remember, I
“ bid you live, (and that in a ro-
“ mance, would be considered as
“ a great condescension in a lady)
“ live to triumph over your ungene-
“ rous relations. My father has heard
“ your history from Admiral Graplin,
“ and will do any thing to serve you;
“ you are to live in that gentleman’s
“ house when he arrives in London,
“ and then, you know, you will
“ have an opportunity of seeing me.
“ Pray how came it your Talisman

“ failed in effecting an immediate
“ cure ; I fancy you have not suffi-
“ cient faith for miracles.

“ Adieu !

“ Your sincere Friend,

“ CHARLOTTE ACTON.”

As soon as Mr. Weston had finished his letter he rose up in his bed, pulled off his night cap, and hummed a tune, and in a few minutes got up, shaved himself, put on a clean shirt, and sat down to breakfast like a gentleman, that is, in his morning gown and slippers.

Mr. Rattle came in just as the coffee was placed on the table, and produced among other things, a letter from Sally Williams, who had been some time in London with her aunt. “ Egad, Tom !” cried he, “ I think I
“ should be the happiest fellow on
“ earth,

“ earth, if I could marry this girl;
“ but damme, Sir, I can’t——The
“ old boy has answered the letter we
“ sent with a very laconic negative.
“ Sir, I will do no more, with a
“ d——d long dash underneath; he’ll
“ go to the devil, but that’s nothing.
“ Now I had just formed a plan for
“ leading a country life, had got it
“ all in my head;—killing my own
“ mutton, sowing my own peas,
“ brewing my own beer, &c. dam-
“ me, Weston, a fine thought is come
“ into my head; let’s get a letter of
“ licence for two years from our re-
“ lations for a little more fun, and
“ then, damme, give it up for once.
“ The King’s Bench is my only al-
“ ternative by G—d—I met a taylor
“ this morning, and retreated at least
“ seven yards to escape him, but he

“called out, Mr. Rattle; I stopped
“short, I was obliged to stop, while
“he mentioned a little trifle, he was
“very sorry, but——So I gave him
“another order, and was out of sight
“in a moment.”

Mr. Weston now enlarged on the particulars of his situation, mentioning his design to change his lodgings, and enter on a more frugal plan; while his friend was amusing himself with a scheme he had in his head of getting some cash. “My dear Weston, I shall receive ten pounds this week to a certainty, five is at your service; I’ll bring it on Saturday; will you beat home?” Mr. Weston appeared to accept very readily the offer his friend made him, though he suspected very much poor Rattle would be disappointed.

After

After breakfast Mr. Rattle took his leave, and set out for the city, to procure cash from an advertising money lender; and our hero to take a new lodging, which he at last obtained in Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road.

CHAP. XVII.

*Containing the adventures our hero met
with the first night of his being in
his new lodging.*

OUR hero, who was pretty much fatigued with the perambulations of the morning, laid himself down, in hopes of having a little sleep: but it was some time before this friend of the unfortunate obeyed his summons; indeed not till after he had turned about twenty times, changed his pillow, and repeatedly altered his situation in search of a more somnific posture.

But it was his destiny that night to experience few of the sweets of slumber; for no sooner had Morpheus,

pheus, the gay god of dreams, presented his floating images of riches, honours, love, disaster, &c. &c. than our hero was awakened by the unequal notes of a human voice, now base, now treble, against all the rules of harmony ; “ In the name of God !
“ what are you all about ? make haste
“ do ; curse you, what do you stop
“ for ? we shall all be killed, unless
“ you make haste.”

At these last words, Mr. Weston started up in his bed, and was considering whether he should rise or not, when he heard a clatter of female tongues ; one of which sounded like a gong, and was, at least, an octave higher than the rest ; “ What do you
“ want here, Sir ? take away your
“ sword, you’ll be the death of the
“ woman !”

Our hero now jumped out of bed, put on his waistcoat and breechès, seized his oak stick, and sallied down to the first floor, and without hesitation entered the room, when he beheld a group of the most extraordinary personages that had ever appeared in adventure.

In the middle of the apartment was a Gothic old woman, whose shape resembled that triangle, known by the name of Isocèles; the strings of her night-cap, which on an occasion of more decorum, or less danger, would have been modestly tied under her pretty double chin, were now left flying like streamers, in the wind; the rough carve work of her face resembled such as may still be seen in the antiquities of this country; her eyes distilling gum (not aromatic) bleared only at the excess
of

of light, which offended them; her handkerchief, which had only been thrown over her neck, discovered large portions of those heavenly bodies whose magnitudes were increased with domestic duty; one stocking that had been left untied by the neglected garter, which she held in her hand, described innumerable circles from the center, attacking in its way every thing that came within its periphery.

Were I, however, to analyse the beauties of this old lady with care, many more things might be found about her person to entertain; but a more agreeable object stood next her, a smart young lady in a French night-cap, and a white fringed petticoat, which was the only covering time had allowed her to put on; her bosom, which appeared through the opening
of

of a laced chemise, as white as snow, was formed with such luxuriant perfection, as would have moved the most torpid monk in Christendom; this, with a fine taper leg, and other things that occurred to Tom's imagination, fixed his attention so much that it was some time before he saw a little fat, short man, rushing from behind the bed curtain, with an immense nose, prominent jaws, long sleeves, and disordered ruffles; the tail of his wig sticking up behind; only one buckle in his shoes, and some kind of instrument in his hand.

But our hero's confusion had made him miss a man, whose sculpturised, or sepulcherised appearance, struck awe into the minds of all those who beheld him.

He was a very long figure, re-
remarkably

markably thin; his flesh was of a pale dead white, only somewhat relieved by a very black shirt that hung in fragments down his sides; on his head was tied a handkerchief, an angle of which reached half way down his back; one sleeve of his shirt torn from the wrist, left bare a bony arm, which seemed to hold the javelin of death; but which really grasped nothing more than a long tuck, which belonged to a cane.

But it was not this instrument of destruction that alarmed the fair part of this assembly. It was that shock to female delicacy, a man without his breeches; for it is not life that our virtuous British maidens dread the loss of; it is something more valuable to them—their honour—their virtue—their—and how much are these in danger from

from seeing a tall man, fans culotte.

Retirez, villain, voleur, scelerat, was the only language the long gentleman spoke, who was lunging and thrusting at the astonished little man behind the curtain.

Mr. Weston now inquired of the young lady the cause of the disturbance, who answered him, "Indeed, Sir, I don't know."—"What's the matter, old woman?" "Lord, poor lady!" was the only answer our hero could procure. "What the devil is all this about?" to the little man, who exclaimed, "I can do nothing, Sir, unless I am left to my operations! Is this treatment indeed!"

At this instant the tall man gave him a thrust, which had nearly terminated his existence, when a faint voice,

voice, which came from the bed, called out "nurse," and the old woman, who had been some time silent, cried out, "Oh, my God! do, gentlemen, go, and leave me and the doctor together."—"Doctor!" returned Tom, who now began to unravel the mystery, "Why did not you tell me this before? Which is the doctor?"—"The gentleman with the long nose, Sir."

Mr. Weston now addressed the tall gentleman in French; "Mon-
"sieur, mon dieu, retirez, il est me-
"decin; il n'y a point des voleurs
"ici—c'est un accoucheur! est-il
"possible! je vous demande pardon."

The gladiator now turned to make a retreat, presenting, to the utter confusion of the old lady, the interior parts of his person, which the ragged rem-

remnants of his shirt permitted but too plainly to be seen.

It appeared, now plainly, that Monsieur Beauvais, who slept in the garret, (and who was a perfect stranger to the English language) had imagined the noise he heard of the old nurse running about the house, to be nothing less than a gang of house-breakers, and Miss Johnson, who slept on the second floor, being alarmed by his unintelligible jargon, immediately concluded the house was on fire, and run down stairs before our hero knew any thing of the matter; as for the mistress of the house, she had set out in search of a midwife, fearing the doctor would not arrive in time.

Mr. Weston, after begging pardon of the company withdrew, leaving the women to drink gin and proceed

ceed in the ceremony. His mind was so much employed with this ludicrous adventure, that after he had laid down, he lay some time awake, collecting in his mind all the different circumstances: the pillow appeared to him more easy, the bed softer, and the sheets finer, than in the former part of the night.

Mr. Weston now felt himself disposed to sleep, turned about for that purpose, and, with astonishment, beheld at his bedside, a fine creature undressing; she first took off her garters, and then proceeded, farther perhaps, than the ladies who read this would like me to proceed, and at last stepping into bed, was nearly laid down before she found some body there; Miss Johnson now exclaimed, falling into our hero's arms, "Good
" God! a man here," and lay in that
posture

posture for some moments insensible.

Tom was employed assuring her of her safety, and protesting his regard, when, to his utter disappointment, the same old beldam he had seen below, entered the room, exclaiming, "Lord, ma'am, we shall want your assistance!" but on a nearer approach, seeing a man, and the attitude in which fright had placed the young lady in the bed, she cried out, "Oh, the infamous huffy!" and hurried down stairs as fast as she could. Miss Johnson, immediately attempted to jump out of bed, but was with-held by Tom, till she began to scream out, "Sir, I'll raise the house, murder! thieves! &c." which outcry, at last relieved her from his embraces. Mean while Monsieur Beauvais, who knew a good deal,

deal, though he did not know English, hearing the lovely steps of the old nurse, concluding it was Miss Johnson, followed her down the stairs, and proceeded to improprieties which nothing but darkness could admit, and which I mean to leave in darkness.

The old woman, who had forgot, or did not chuse to make use of the different kind of defences practised on these occasions, such as screaming, swearing, crying, fainting, &c. very quietly repeated, "Dear Sir, " what do you mean? what do you " want? I beg you won't." While he was cajoling her in French: "Ma " chere ami, permettez moi, je vous " aime, allons nous coucher, &c."

But the fates were averse this night to the fanciful tricks of love, for Miss Johnson, in her haste down stairs,

stairs, with a velocity of motion, that accelerates with the distance, fell violently in contact with Monsieur Beauvais and the old nurse, and all three of them fell headlong down the stairs, and lay on the landing place in various positions and attitudes; which I leave to the reader's fertile imagination to conceive; the little astonished doctor came out with a candle, and stood petrified at the sight, for being a flight of stairs above them, he had, what painters call, a bird's eye view, could see things to advantage.

It was some time before peace was restored; Mr. Weston, however, who was a stranger to the last part of these adventures, and was still in bed, sufficiently occupied with the thoughts of the lady who had left him, and was endeavouring to find out the
mystery

mistery of her coming to his bed-side, when looking round the room, he perceived hats, bonnets, ribbons, a toilet, &c. which circumstances convinced him he had mistaken his room, which happened to be the next to her's. Our hero, however, thought it proper to stay in her chamber till her return, to make some kind of apology, which the manuscript says she very kindly accepted.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

In which the expected moment arrives, and a sudden and alarming change takes place in our hero's affairs, which once more obliges him to change his lodging.

MR. Weston had been some time floating between hope and disappointment; one moment striking against difficulty, and the next sliding on a smooth surface of success: but the tempest, which had been gathering at a distance, fell now all at once; he found himself in arrears, six weeks lodging—he owed his taylor ten pounds, (for he employed Mr. Maclean very little, from obvious motives)

I

tives) and was indebted to his hair-dresser above six. He had nobody to apply to for cash; Mr. Bowden was in the country—no prospect of the admiral's coming to town—his friend Rattle had ran away, three thousand pounds in debt; and to sum up his misfortunes, the newspaper informed him that Mr. Placid was no more, so that all his hopes of employment were at an end.

It is easy for a man who knows any thing of the world, to guess the state of Mr. Weston's mind at this moment; he had been obliged to make away with all his little valuables--his wardrobe decreased, and even what he had, were the make-shifts of a man in bad circumstances; and of money, only half-a-guinea remained.

The lady of the house where Mr. Weston lived, unfortunately for him, possessed all the necessary knowledge of common law; and was versed in the practice of the Marshalsea, and County courts. She was in person a very thin woman, her cheeks were lean and hollow, and her nose exceeding sharp; she was troubled with an asthmatic cough and a periodical deafness. Mrs. Edwards was, besides, a most eternal gossip, and by the power of her tongue, possessed an entire dominion over her husband, who was a poor little harmless breeches-maker.

Mr. Weston was one Saturday morning (I think it was) leaning back in his chair in a thoughtful posture; one hand in his bosom, and the other in his empty pocket,
when

when this lady broke in upon his study, and after a long pause, and a very polite curtsy, told him, “ She “ made bold to call in for her little “ trifle.”—“ Madam,” returned our hero, “ I— I— I— have not any “ cash at present.”—“ Well, but “ Mr. Whatd’y’call’m, when am I to “ expect it ?”—“ In a few days, Ma- “ dam, I hope to ——” “ In a few “ days !” holding the door in her hand, “ you know you agreed to “ pay weekly : ready furnished lod- “ gers are here and there in a mo- “ ment, you know, Sir.”—“ Ma- “ dam, you may depend upon being “ paid this week.”—“ This week ! “ indeed I must have it to-morrow ; “ honest working people can’t afford “ to give credit ; I am sure nobody “ would trust me a half-penny, and “ my poor husband works day and
K 2 “ night,

“night, for a little pittance, God knows! and now they are going to tax us again.”—“Why, Madam,” returned Mr. Weston, “do you think I want to cheat you?”—“Cheat me! no, it isn’t altogether that, but one does not know nobody, you know.”—“Well, I can’t pay it now.”—“Very well, Sir, those that won’t pay, must be made to pay.”—“Zounds! what would the woman have?”—“Why my money to be sure—gentlemen indeed! fine gentlemen! a parcel of ——”—“Don’t abuse me.”—“Abuse! I have a right surely to speak for my own; there’s nothing but a parcel of swindlers going about, I think.”—“Get out of the room!”—“Out of the room!”—“I shan’t, pay me my money first.”—“Damn the woman!”—“Don’t
“damn

“ damn me, you poor mean pitiful
“ fop; if my husband was here he’d
“ ring your nose; he would, you
“ blackguard you!”—The poor man,
by the bye, was in the kitchen at the
time, trembling like a hare, at the
passion in which he heard his wife.
“ Go,” continued Mrs. Edwards,
“ go and pay the score at the chand-
“ ler’s shop; do, you nasty mean fel-
“ low!”

Mr. Weston now found it abso-
lutely necessary to put her out of
the room, which treatment the lady
resented with a fresh torrent of abuse.
“ What, you’d strike me, wou’d you?
“ you dirty mean fellow!—a gentle-
“ man! yes, I wou’d not give that
“ (snapping her fingers) for such
“ gentry! howsomever I’ll Marshal-
“ sea you—I’ll see what that will do;

“ I can have law for nothing; I have

“ a cousin a counsellor—yes, I have.”

Our hero locked himself into his room, till he found the noise grew fainter, and that she had turned the torrent upon her poor husband, who was begging her to compose herself.

The moment Mr. Weston was somewhat recovered, a single knock (which is the sure prognostic of a dun) came to the door, and introduced Mrs. Mangle, the washer woman, who entered our hero's room with a very low curtsy. “ Sir, as I
“ was going by the door, I thought
“ I might as well call for my little
“ bill.”—“ You shall have the money, my dear Mrs. Mangle, on
“ Friday.”—“ Mr. Weston, you
“ know it has been a long time standing; I am sure I wou'd not have
“ called,

“called, only I am in wants of the
“money.”—“I can’t give it you
“now, so it don’t signify talking.”
—“Well, Sir, if you comes to that,
“I must have it——” At this in-
stant, up came the coal man, the
hair-dresser, and the newspaper man,
each with a bill in his hand, and
ranged themselves at the door.

Poor Mr. Weston found it no easy
matter to rid himself of this phalanx
of duns; at last, however, finding it
of no purpose, they retired of them-
selves, leaving him to contemplate
his misfortunes.

Our hero walked for ten minutes
after about the room, like a madman;
cursing his extravagance, and swear-
ing to himself, that if he should get
out of trouble, he would never be so
imprudent again: at last he went out,
and taking a pocket book of his mo-
ther’s,

ther's which was worth a couple of guineas, with him, visited the whole round of pawnbrokers; and was obliged at last to pledge it for three and sixpence. Mr. Weston was on his return home, and just at his own door, when he was accosted by a genteel young man:—"Sir, I am sorry, but you are my prisoner; I have a writ at the suit of Mr. ———, your taylor." Our hero understood enough of the business, to answer, "Very well, Sir, where am I to go?" This matter was soon adjusted, and a coach taken to Chancery-Lane.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIX.

Our hero's adventure in the spunging house.—Writes a letter to his friend Soapy, and receives a very friendly answer.--His releasement, and a new dilemma in which he is involved.

MR. Weston, who was rather of a philosophical disposition, did not feel so much when he found himself in a spunging house, as might be imagined. Indeed, he knew he had a resource in the generosity of his city friend, and sat down immediately to write him a letter for the money, concealing the circumstance of his being arrested; it was as follows:—

K 5

DEAR

“DEAR WILL,

“The many kind offers of friendship you have repeatedly made me, obliges me to apply to you in preference to any other person, for a small sum, about fifteen pounds, which shall be repaid in a few weeks.

“I am, DEAR WILL,

“Your’s affectionately,

“TOM WESTON.”

“Pray make my compliments to Mrs. Soapy.”

To which he received the following answer :

“DEAR SIR,

“I should certainly do any thing in my power to serve you ; but as you have mentioned that Admiral Graplin will supply you with money, I think you had better apply
“to

“ to him than to me, who am but a
“ young beginner in life; and then,
“ if you should die, I could never be
“ repaid.

“ Your sincere friend,
“ WILLIAM SOAPY.”

Conceive, if possible, the surprise, the pain, the indignation Mr. Weston felt when he received this note; the conflict in his heart overcame him at first, and he sunk senseless in the chair: then recovering, talked some time to himself. “ An old
“ schoolfellow—by his own desire
“ too—damn the scoundrel:” and at last had recourse to those composing sonnets, full of the unfaithfulness, ingratitude, and inconstancy, of friendship. He was at first inclined to pen an answer, but his passion at

last ended in silent and lasting contempt.

Though somewhat doubtful of his success, he wrote another note to Miss Harriet Wilkinson, mentioning the place where he was; the man returned with no answer, for that young lady had just gone out.

In about half an hour, however, a coach stopped at the door, and a lady stepped out, who immediately inquired for Mr. Weston; Miss Wilkinson was presently introduced to him, and flew to his arms with all the warmth of a long and real friendship. “Oh, Mr. Weston! how came you here?”

Our hero now related all the circumstances of his ill fortune, mentioning particularly the answer he had had from his friend.—“Good God!” exclaimed the gentle Harriet, “what baseness,

“ baseness, what mean, cursed in-
“ terest must environ the heart of
“ the man, who, possessed of a for-
“ tune himself, can deny so small
“ a favour to his friend. Do not,
“ Mr. Weston, reject a little present
“ from your Harriet, if you do, you
“ will hurt me very much. Surely,
“ though I cannot be the happy
“ Charlotte Acton, yet I may be your
“ friend.” Miss Wilkinson now in-
formed our hero that the money she
offered was at her own disposal; for
that soon after he had seen her last,
Mr. Vincent died, and had left her
his whole fortune, which was about
ten thousand pounds. Mr. Weston
found it so disagreeable a task to refuse
the generous offer this young lady
made him, that he at last accepted it.
It was a fifty pounds bank bill.

In the same room where Mr.
Weston and his lady were engaged in
a con-

a conversation, there was an old officer, who had been in the house about three hours, and had sent to his friends to get bail; he, however, seemed very much depressed, and paid no attention whatever to any thing that was passing.

The runners had just returned from searching the office, to see if there were any detainers against Mr. Weston; when a gentleman's carriage came to the door, in which was Sir Julius and Miss Acton, who came there to bail the old gentleman—who, Tom was afterwards informed, was a brother officer.

Unfortunately for our hero, he was just stepping into the hackney coach with Harriet Wilkinson, before he perceived Miss Acton in the other carriage; nothing could equal the confusion of this young lady, when

when she saw Mr. Weston engaged with so handsome, so beautiful a rival: a tear of indignation, mixed with pride, ran down her cheek. She could hardly, at first, believe what she saw, but when convinced, a little portion of revenge mixed itself in her offended bosom.

Mr. Weston, though he had nothing to accuse himself of, knew very well that appearances were too much against him for to hope an easy reconciliation; and with this idea his spirits sunk so much below par, that he was, perhaps, the worst companion in the world for a young lady like Miss Wilkinfon. She, however, attributed his melancholy, to the situation in which he had been involved, and with the best intention in the world, made him miserable by

by obliging him to stay dinner with her.

As soon, however, as he could take his leave with propriety, he returned home to his lodgings, more spleenetic and out of humour than when he was without a fixpence. He found a letter laying on the table from Admiral Graplin, which was to the following effect :——

“ DEAR BOY,

“ I am in town, and that’s a sufficient invitation for you to come to
“ see me. I have heard of Mr. Placid’s death, but, however, you have
“ another friend while your poor
“ mother lives in my remembrance ;
“ besides, it’s my duty, you are my
“ godson, and dare I to forget it ? Dis-
“ charge your lodging immediately :
“ while there’s a cabin in my house,
“ you

“ you shall always be welcome to
“ sling a hammock in it.

“ Your sincere friend,

“ GRAPLIN.”

Though in the latter part of this letter a little of the tar may appear, I must observe that he never made use of any technical or professional terms, except in jest, or by way of metaphor. He was an excellent seaman and officer, and at the same time a real and accomplished gentleman.

Mr. Weston had been some time in the room before he perceived another letter on the mantle-piece, which he found contained a few words from Miss Charlotte Acton.

“ SIR,

“ Though this letter will too plainly
“ shew that I once esteemed you ;
“ yet

“ yet I cannot, in justice to myself,
“ conceal my indignation, after what
“ I have seen to-day, and the conver-
“ sation I have heard repeated: how
“ can you recompense an injured
“ girl, who has been foolish and ro-
“ mantic enough to give you her
“ heart, and was on the point of be-
“ stowing her hand; you have, how-
“ ever, interest enough left to be
“ forgiven, though I am determined
“ never to hear your name again.

“ Your’s, &c.

“ CHARLOTTE ACTON.”

“ Well,” repeated our hero, “ this
“ completes my misery. Oh, cruel
“ fortune! keep back your favours,
“ if they are thus dearly purchased!
“ A few hours ago, money was all I
“ wanted, and now that is in my
“ possession, my peace of mind has
“ fled; when success comes mixed
“ with

“ with such a bitter as this, how
“ much more preferable is poverty !”
With such reflections as these, Mr.
Weston retired to bed; when the fa-
tigue of the day so much overcame
the inclination he had to think, that
he soon fell fast into a sound sleep,
which continued till eight the next
morning. Mr. Weston dedicated
the breakfast hour in penning the
following answer to Miss Acton’s
letter :—

“ MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

“ When circumstances appear too
“ strong against an unfortunate cul-
“ prit, his council immediately ad-
“ vises him to trust to the mercy of
“ the court; and when he cannot
“ bring his judge to suppose any
“ thing in his favour, he speaks in
“ vain: but if I have, as you have
“ kindly said, some interest left in
“ your

“ your heart; believe at least, how-
“ ever improbable, there might have
“ been some good reasons for my
“ conduct; when you have allowed
“ so far, then will I tell you that the
“ generous girl you saw, (and whom
“ you would honour, if you knew
“ her) was, in my early, happy,
“ days, my schoolmate; my little
“ friend came to a prison to set me
“ free; but esteem is the only return
“ I can make this unfortunate lady,
“ who has disposed of her heart and
“ affections to a base wretch, who
“ deceived her, and ruined for ever
“ the peace of a mind he ought to
“ have been proud of preserving. Can
“ you imagine, my dear Charlotte,
“ how I thus dare to speak of a wo-
“ man who is accused of being a ri-
“ val? But this is the language of
“ truth, and will in a future day ap-
“ pear

“pear with the strength its injured
“cause will give it.—Oh! my
“Charlotte! how can you then add
“to the misfortunes of

“Your most true, and

“Faithful friend,

“TOM WESTON.”

As soon as Mr. Weston had finished his letter, he dressed himself as well as he possibly could, and waited on his friend, Admiral Graplin, who received him with all the warmth of friendship, and was so glad to see him, that he made him immediately send for his things and discharge his lodging.

CHAP. XX.

Containing the new arrangements our hero makes after his good fortune ; and a train of lucky incidents that lead to a reconciliation with Miss Acton.—A description of a ball, &c.

ADMIRAL Graplin's generosity had so far removed the difficulties that had furrounded his young friend, that nothing could remain on his mind to render him unhappy, except the disagreeable dilemma in which he was placed in respect to Miss Acton.

In the family to which our hero was introduced, there was a lady, a sister of the Admiral's, who particularly

larly engaged his esteem; she was possessed of every accomplishment, understood all the modern languages, had a great taste for drawing, and was an excellent poetess. Miss Mary Graplin, though not handsome, was blest with so affable a temper, and so agreeable a manner, that every one who knew, spoke of her with respect and esteem; she was, besides, a very sensible woman, and knew a great deal of the world: in the early part of her life, she had a real and unfortunate attachment for a young gentleman, who was killed abroad, and never since could be brought to think of matrimony.

The family consisted of the old Admiral, Miss Mary Graplin, a Miss Holland, a visitor, and our hero; a little domestic party, that indulged themselves in every rational pleasure,
and

and were constantly finding out amusements for one another.

In this intimacy, Miss Mary Graplin soon discovered from our hero's constant lowness of spirit, absence, melancholy, &c. that he was engaged in an affair of the heart, which he endeavoured in vain to conceal, and took an opportunity one day to tell her brother, who, after listening very attentively to her suspicions, exclaimed, "Egad, I believe you are right, sister! it is certainly as you say—I'll find him about it!"

Presently after Mr. Weston came, and was something at a loss to account for a general smile which appeared in their countenances at his entrance, when the old Admiral accosted him: "Tom, the ladies have been saying you are in love; is it true?"—"I dare say," returned

turned Mr. Weston, "Miss Graplin pretends to that discovery—but suppose I am in love?"—"Oh! nothing," returned Miss Graplin, "only we were going to Lady Salton's ball to-morrow night, and there is to be a young lady there, who might possibly make you think your swan a crow."—"Oh, Madam!" returned Mr. Weston, "I thank you for your care, but if I am in love, it is with one who need not dread a rival."

"Well but," cried the old Admiral, "who is it you mean to produce?"—"Who is it?" returned Miss Graplin, "why the beautiful Miss Charlotte Acton, the toast of all the men, and the envy of all the women of the day."—"Miss Acton," repeated Mr. Weston, sighing, "I have heard her name;"

—“ Well, will you trust yourself
“ with us ?” continued Miss Graplin.
“ --Certainly, Madam,” returned Mr.
Weston, “ and without the least
“ fear of abating my former affec-
“ tions.” —“ But you must take
“ care, Sir,” interrupted Miss Hol-
land, “ if you should be caught, you
“ have a dangerous rival to contend
“ with ; the gay, the rich, the ac-
“ complished Monkton pays ho-
“ mage there, and is well received.”

It was somewhat difficult at this
moment for our Hero to suppress his
feelings, when she repeated the name
of his formidable rival. “ Oh, Ma-
“ dam !” returned Mr. Weston,
“ you must think very little of my
“ gallantry, to suppose the name
“ only of a competitor would damp
“ the ardour of my passion.” Thus
ended a conversation in which our
hero

hero was but too much interested, and which served still more to depress his spirits.

The generous supply the Admiral had afforded, were more than sufficient to discharge his debts; so that the remainder was applied to make such purchases as would enable him to appear that night to advantage.

But before he entered on these expences, the hair-dresser, the newspaper man, the chandler's shop woman, the laundress, and the landlady herself were summoned to meet at his old lodgings, where each received their several demands; "I am sure I did not mean to trouble you, Sir." — "One don't know what one says at the time," was the new language his creditors had prepared the moment they were sent for to be

paid, nor did they withdraw without the greatest curtleys and obediences they could muster for the occasion.

Our hero now received a letter from Mr. Bowden, in which he was informed that his uncle lay dangerously ill, and that he had in no way disposed of his estates or money; so that the whole would come to his young heir, the fox-hunter. This letter, besides, mentioned that the good clergyman would be in town in a few days. At last the wished-for evening arrived, and at ten o'clock, Admiral Graplin, the ladies, and Mr. Weston, set off in the carriage for Lady Salton's house; the company was exceeding brilliant and numerous, and of the first fashion; Mr. Weston, however, was not long unnoticed: the perfection of his form, the natural ease and elegance he possessed,

I

feffed, the softness of his manner, and the peculiar care with which he moved in the room, soon attracted the attention of the ladies; who decidedly pronounced him a very handsome man. But in spite of the dissipation of the moment, a melancholy spread itself over every thing in our hero's mind; he knew not what was the matter with him, he was dull——his heart felt heavy, and with a sigh looked round the rooms, but in vain, for his Charlotte.

At last Miss Acton entered, led in by Mr. Monckton; this gentleman was the perfect man of fashion, and was possessed of all those little *riens*, which form the art of pleasing: his size was of the middle, his figure exquisitely proportioned—his countenance was striking, and his eye piercing and brilliant; every action

was accompanied with a smile of complaisance, and a douceur of manner. Such was the rival Mr. Weston had to fear.

The old Admiral and Sir Julius soon entered into conversation, the principal subject of which was Mr. Weston's misfortunes; the old baronet was a little surpris'd at meeting again the poor wanderer he receiv'd in his house, and was so much delighted with the adventure, that he immediately ran to his daughter, and introduced our hero in form.

Poor Miss Acton trembled so much at this introduction, for which she was not at all prepared, that she was oblig'd to sit down, when very fortunately, Miss Mary Graplin came to her assistance, and amus'd her with some little chit-chat of the day, from the subject she had indulg'd. In the
mean

mean while, Mr. Monckton engaged himself in a conversation with our hero, to whom he seemed already to entertain a high opinion, though every answer and observation of Mr. Weston's betrayed an absence and incoherency that tasted of madness.

After a minuet, in which Lady Salton honoured the hand of the gay and accomplished Monckton, the country dances began, when Miss Holland came running up to our hero, Mr. Weston, "I have been recommending you as a partner, and you are accepted."—"By whom, pray Madam?"—"Don't be afraid; why Miss Acton."—"Miss Acton, is it possible!"

Mr. Weston was not long before he approached Miss Acton, and taking her hand, whispered, "And can you forgive me?"—"Yes," returned

the gentle Charlotte, "I believe I
"have been wrong."—"The gentle
"pardon you have pronounced, seals
"my happiness for ever."

At this time Mr. Monckton came up, purposely to entreat Miss Acton to give him her hand in her next dance, "I thought, Sir, you danced
"with Lady Salton."—"Lady Salton, Madam!"—"Yes, Sir, I've
"engaged myself."—"Madam, I
"beg pardon." Ridiculous as this circumstance may appear, it afforded in a few minutes a subject of wonder and inquiry in the room; the gay, the accomplished Monckton refused dancing any more, and discovered a chagrin and disappointment that was soon visible to every one.

At three o'clock the assembly broke up, and after a very pressing invitation from Sir Julius and Miss Acton,
Mr.

Mr. Weston left the rooms, and was endeavouring to find out his own company, when a young officer presented him with a letter, the contents of which were a little new to our hero.

“SIR,

“As I have heard you are a gentleman, I call upon you to answer the greatest injury one man can do another; that of meanly endeavouring to supplant him where he has fixed an affection; no one dare come between me and Miss Acton, unless he is willing to risk as much for her as I am ready to do.

“I shall be in St. James’s Park to-morrow at one o’clock, from whence I shall be ready to attend you to any place you please.

“Your humble servant,

“GEORGE MONCKTON.”

L. 5.

“Very

“Very well, Sir,” returned Mr. Weston to the young gentleman who gave it him, “I shall be punctual.” The old Admiral, Miss Mary Graplin, and Miss Holland, now came up; when the ladies began, with a great deal of vivacity, to rally Mr. Weston on his new passion, and enjoyed exceedingly their dexterity in having brought it about; our hero’s spirits, however, had been so much raised, and had suffered so trifling a depression from the idea of being obliged to fight the next morning, that he was more than a match for them, and had, besides, the Admiral on his side. Mr. Weston, the moment he was in his chamber, found himself so fatigued with the business of the day, and the pleasures of the evening, that he undressed himself immediately, and
in

in spite of the thoughts of his impending duel, was asleep in five minutes.

L6

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Some agreeable consequences that ensue from the affair of honour in which Mr. Weston is engaged, where Miss Wilkinson is particularly interested.

IN the morning, however, some serious reflections found their way to his breast. Mr. Weston was naturally of a quiet, peaceable disposition, and abhorred the idea of being obliged coolly to shed the blood of a fellow creature; but nothing could sting more than the disagreeable situation in which it would place the gentle Charlotte, for which, if either fell, she must reproach herself as the cause.

Nothing,

Nothing, however, could set aside the decided laws of honour; and Mr. Weston, resigning at once his objections, and arming himself with a proper resolution for trial, set out for St. James's Park.

Mr. Weston had just entered the Mall when he met Miss Harriet Wilkin-son, nor could he for some time get rid of this young lady, who had entered into a long conversation, and seemed inclined to continue it for two or three hours at least; at last, he ventured to inform her, he had come there to meet a gentleman on business, a Mr. Monckton. "I believe," said he, "that is him in the next walk."—"I think," returned Miss Wilkin-son, "I know the gentleman you have pointed out—Good God! are you sure his name is Monckton?"—"Positive of it, my dear."—"Then

—“Then what a foolish thought
“came to my mind.”—“What
“thought?”—“Oh, my Weston!
“he is the very person of the cruel
“Osborn.”—“Heavens! now I think
“of it,” cried our hero, “this gen-
“tleman has changed his name for
“an estate, and is called Osborn
“Monckton.”—“Then it is him,”
cried Miss Wilkinfon, “the man I
“love, detest, hate, adore!” Such
was the agitation of Miss Wilkin-
fon’s mind at this moment, that she
was obliged to be led to a seat, when
a flood of tears came to her assistance.

This interesting discovery occu-
pied the space of half an hour, when
Mr. Weston, looking at his watch,
found it within a few minutes of the
time appointed. “My dear girl,”
said he, “I am obliged to leave you;
“repose yourself here till my return,
“and

“and then I will inform you more
“particularly of the subject of our
“meeting.”

Our Hero, who had crossed over into another walk, was soon met by Mr. Monckton, in company with two officers in the guards.

After a few minutes passed in a general conversation, Mr. Weston spoke,
“You see, Sir,” to Mr. Monckton,
“I have obeyed your summons; and
“I assure you, most unwillingly:
“when matters are thus serious, the
“generous mind, however brave,
“must feel a damp at the impending consequences.—I have done
“you no injury, my affections are
“prior to yours, and therefore turn
“your accusations on yourself.”

“Sir,” returned Mr. Monckton,
“it is impossible for me to listen to
“any thing but a promise on your
“side,

“fide, to give up all idea of Miss Ac-
“ton.”—“Never, Sir.”—“Then
“Sir, where is your second?”—“I
“have none, Sir; I trust to the ho-
“nour of these gentlemen.”—“Well,
“Sir, then we have no time to lose.”

Mr. Monckton was now walking
out towards Hyde Park, when Mr.
Weston begged him to stop a mo-
ment; “Before, Sir, we enter on a
“business that must be fatal to one
“of us——let us——”—“What
“do you mean, Sir?”—“Oh, hear
“the gentleman,” interrupted the
officers, with a contemptuous
smile.—“I have, Sir,” continued
Mr. Weston, “a few words to say.”
—“Well, Sir,” returned Mr. Monck-
ton, “speak at once, I am not to be
“trifled with.”—“Let us then, Sir,
“recollect whether there is not
“some person we ought to regard
“in-

“involved in ruin by our folly?”—
“What do you mean, Sir? these
“subterfuges are unbecoming a——”
—“Hold, Sir, I ask you again, whe-
“ther you cannot remember some
“base injury done by yourself, which
“will soon, perhaps, be out of your
“power to redress; a meanness,
“not only unbecoming a gentleman,
“but a man?”—“Upon my word,
“Sir, this insulting language is un-
“bearable! come, gentlemen!”—
“No, Sir,” returned Mr. Weston,
“I will not stir a step till you an-
“swer me!”—“Surely, Sir, you
“would not have me doubt your
“courage?”—“Judge of that, Sir,
“as you will; in a few minutes I
“shall have the power to damp that
“of a greater hero, and with one
“single word.”—“How, Sir!”—
“Re-

“Remember the name of Harriet
“Wilkinson.”

At this sentence Mr. Monckton turned pale, while his companions were wrapt up in silent astonishment.

“Do you think, Sir,” continued Mr. Weston, “that if the good, “the generous Miss Acton, knew “that story, she would ever take to “her arms the base perfidious seducer of a poor innocent, deserted “girl? She, however, is now sufficiently protected, though not by “the generous Osborn—Now, Sir, “I am ready to revenge both myself “and her.”—“Damnation, Sir!”

returned Mr. Monckton, with a long pause, “you have unmanned “me; the name you have mentioned, “acts like a charm to hold me!”— “Then, Sir, forgive me!” cried our hero,

hero, "I have said too much, and
"the only recompence I can make,
"is to conduct you to the girl whom
"I yet see you love!"

Mr. Weston now advanced with the gentleman to the place where Miss Wilkinson was seated, and still in tears; when Mr. Monckton, unperceived, taking her hand, said in a low soft voice, "My Harriet, do you
"not know me?" But no sooner had these reconciling words been uttered, than she fell senseless on his bosom.

In this interval, Mr. Monckton tasted again the lips he had so long forgotten; and as soon as he found her able to listen to him, continued,
"Oh, my Harriet! forgive the too-
"much favoured Osborn. You
"know not," to the gentlemen round him, "half the injustice I have done
"to

“to this generous girl. But do not
“imagine, my dear Harriet, that my
“heart consented to the last cruel
“action. And in that bosom, form
“some excuse for a mind plunged in
“excess and dissipation. From my
“infancy, love was the most predo-
“minant passion in my breast; pre-
“cedent the manners of the country
“in which I was brought up, and
“an early inclination for intrigue,
“soon dispossessed those virtues
“which opposed—crimes I thought
“brilliant; and bad actions, to which
“I found a certain fame annexed.
“I was acquainted with the arts of
“seduction from a boy—my per-
“son grew agreeable, and success
“attended every gallantry—I indul-
“ged the power I found I possessed;
“and from a vicious principle ex-
“tended, I sought the ruin of vir-
“tue,

“ true, and unguarded innocence,
“ which is a mirror to my crimes.
“ Oh, my Harriet ! I can hardly look
“ at you ; find some excuse to par-
“ don me, and accept the only re-
“ compence I have to offer, my
“ hand.—From this moment, adieu
“ to the cursed errors of fashion ! Do-
“ mestic peace and happiness dwells
“ in this bosom.”—“ Then,” re-
turned Miss Wilkinfon, “ all is for-
“ given here.”

Mr. Weston was engaged, during this tender reconciliation, in such a number of pleasing subjects, that he stood silent the whole time, till Mr. Monckton turning to him, said, “ Sir,
“ the name of Osborn would not
“ admit of the declining of a duel,
“ without a reason ; but when the
“ generous cause is known, which
“ held our hands, the most tenacious
“ honour

“honour must approve. Go, Sir,
“to the amiable Miss Acton; im-
“prove the generous passion you
“have indulged, and claim the hand
“you have so much deserved; and
“let us, my Harriet, retire to some
“sweet spot of nature, where your
“Osborn may learn ‘the luxury of
“doing good, and taste far purer
“pleasure than from fashion springs.”

Thus agreeably had the difficulties of the morning ended, when Mr. Weston parted from his friends more than sufficiently recompensed in having been the happy instrument of so much good.

C H A P.

CHAP. XXII.

In which the prospect brightens all at once, and begins to promise more good fortune to our hero.

WHEN Mr. Weston returned home to the Commodore's house, he found Mr. Bowden just arrived. "I have, Tom," said the old gentleman the moment he entered, "some news for you."—"Bad I suppose," returned Tom.—"Why, yes; there is some bad in it, "because there is death in it," replied Mr. Bowden; "I bring you an "account of the death of your uncle "and cousin, who ended this life, "both in the same week; you re-
3 "member

“ member I told you young West-
“ ton was a great fox-hunter. Well,
“ Sir, he went out last Friday a
“ hunting with some gentlemen, and
“ was, in the course of the chase,
“ separated from them.—His horse,
“ at last came home without him,
“ and a diligent search being made
“ the young gentleman was found in
“ farmer Murray’s field, without the
“ least signs of life. Mr. Weston
“ was at this time confined to his
“ bed, given over by the physicians.
“ Mr. Vacuum was at Peterbo-
“ rough hunting; so that I was sent
“ for; a lawyer was in the room,
“ and a will drawn up; but fortu-
“ nately for you, his hand was inca-
“ pable of making the signature.—
“ Good God!” returned our hero,
“ is it possible!”—“ You see,” cried
the old Admiral, “ how Heaven per-
“ verted

“verted all the views of your cruel
“uncle.”

It cannot be supposed that Mr. Weston felt at this time sufficient regret to damp the agreeable part of this news. He flew immediately to Sir Julius Acton's house, where he found his Charlotte alone at breakfast, who was acquainted already with all the circumstances of his good fortune.—“So Mr. Weston,” cried this young lady as soon as he entered the room, “I wish you joy! “Heaven begins to smile upon you “now, indeed!”—“Yes,” returned Mr. Weston, “and another smile “would recompense me for all I “have suffered.”—“Hold,” replied Miss Acton, “I am the friend of the “unfortunate only; and must now, “like a good Genii, leave you to enjoy your happiness, and seek out
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“again for some wretched being
“who claims my assistance!”

“To enjoy happiness!” repeated
Mr. Weston, with a sigh.—“I have
“been wishing,” continued Miss
Acton, “to speak with you. To be
“serious, Sir, I have a letter in my
“pocket, which has produced a fatal
“change in my mind; the generous
“author has prevailed for another,
“when he found it impossible to suc-
“ceed himself.”—“Good Heavens!
“Madam, what do you mean?”
—“Nay, Sir, do not be angry; you
“know very well I can yet do as I
“please, and as I never gave you
“cause to hope—”—“Is it possi-
“ble!” repeated our hero to him-
self.—“I am, then, Sir,” continued
Miss Acton, “obliged to accept the
“man here recommended—in grati-
“tude, accept him! nor will you
“yourself

“ yourself offer a single word against
“ the reasons that force me to com-
“ pliance.” Mr. Weston’s perplexity
was so great at this moment, that it
would not permit him to judge whe-
ther she was in jest or earnest. “ Well
“ then,” cried Miss Acton, “ read
“ this;” putting a letter in his hand,
which he tore open in a moment, and
read as follows:—

“ *My dear Charlotte.*—Damnation !

“ Though I have loved you to
“ distraction; and though I pressed
“ that gentle hand to accept mine at
“ the altar, still my heart rejected the
“ pleasing hope, and unwilling, led
“ me to another subject: had you
“ consented, we had for ever been
“ unblest; remembrance would have
“ poisoned all my pleasures, and
“ have destroyed our future feli-
“ city. I should have hated you in

“ the midst of love; and in a melancholy absence of mind have
“ shunned the woman I ought to
“ have esteemed as my wife. Heaven has, however, preserved me,
“ and by a kind accident brought me
“ back to a more generous passion—
“ to my neglected, long deserted Harriet; and to recompense that tender bosom, I now resign an angel.
“ Adieu! dear Madam, accept my
“ generous young friend, who deserves your esteem; and permit me
“ to call myself, your most sincere

“ Friend and servant,

“ GEORGE OSBORN.”

“ Good Heavens! what a letter,” exclaimed our hero,—“ And now,” continued Miss Acton, “ do you
“ know what I mean to do?”—“ To
“ follow his advice, certainly;” returned Mr. Weston.—“ Oh dear!

“ no;”

“no;” cried Miss Acton, with a smile,
“you have rejected it before, and I
“am determined not to be trifled
“with.”

At this moment Sir Julius and the old Admiral entered the room, with Miss Mary Acton, Mr. and Mrs. Monckton, Miss Holland, and the good curate; when a very agreeable party was formed for three or four weeks in the country, in which Mr. Weston was particularly included, and where he had again the pleasure to see his old friend Keeper.

CHAP. XXIII.

In which we see our hero agreeably situated at Acton Hall.—A remarkable accident, by which he falls in with his old friend Rattle, and the agreeable consequences that ensue.

A FEW weeks had passed, during which our little party engaged in every pleasure, and tasted every rational diversion the country could afford, when one evening they agreed to visit a little strolling party, that had obtained leave to perform in the village. They had hardly been seated five minutes in this temple of Melpomene, which was a barn; before the curtain drew up, and presently a very handsome Richard entered on the

the boards, in whose person our hero immediately recollected his old friend Rattle. However this accident might affect him, he was determined to conceal himself till the end of the play, that he might see his friend's performance, and preserve the peace of the house.

At the starting scene, however, Mr. Rattle ran with his sword so near our hero's throat, as occasioned him, though in extreme danger, to burst out into a fit of laughter.

Poor Rattle was just exclaiming, "It is but a dream!" when his eye caught our hero; his astonishment at this moment was so great, that his limbs trembled, his voice faltered, and his knees knocked together; the what few spectators and the critics had never seen a better starting scene.

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Poor Rattle was just exclaiming, "It is but a dream!" when his eye caught our hero; his astonishment at this moment was so great, that his limbs trembled, his voice faltered, and his knees knocked together; the whole house clapped, and the critics, what few there were, declared they had never seen a better starting scene.

Catesby's entrance relieved our young Roscius a moment; but presently the dialogue forsook him, his memory failed him, and Richard found it was impossible, "to be himself again." The plaudits were now changed into hisses, and the hero of the buskin retired behind the scenes; an apology was immediately made to the audience, in which it was said, "The gentleman was taken extremely ill."

Mr. Weston now left his company, and inquiring for his friend, was shewn to his lodging, where he found Mr. Rattle, *in propria persona*, that is, in his old green coat, with the black velvet cape, who started up the moment he saw him—"Damme, Tom Weston! who the devil should have thought of seeing you? By
"G—d,

“G—d, you look—Eh, what! the
“old boy dead—So, so, the sweet
“little cherub has taken care of you
“at last—Ah! damme—well, what
“do you think of our performance?”
“—Why, very well;” returned Mr.
Weston; “but what could induce
“you to turn stroller?”—“My mis-
“fortunes,” replied Rattle, “and to
“amuse me from reflection. It is a
“merry life, and fit for any man who
“has no other alternative but hang-
“ing. You know, Mr. Weston, I
“had spent my money, tired my
“friends, and got over head and ears
“in debt; in this situation, a prison
“must soon have closed the scene.
“But I thought of this scheme, and
“as soon as I arrived here, addressed
“Mr. Period, the manager; that was
“he that performed King Henry, a
“thin man. Sir, said I, when I

M 5

“was

“ was introduced to him, I am an
“ unfortunate exile, without friends,
“ money, or expectation; if your
“ party will receive me, I may do a
“ little good; I have some idea of
“ theatrical matters.—Sir, (returned
“ he) I was a little while ago in the
“ same situation; you have found
“ here an asylum. Pray, what is
“ your forte; Tragedy or Comedy? at
“ present we are provided with the
“ first cast of characters.—Comedy,
“ said I, is what I excel in; but
“ tragedy I——. After a few com-
“ pliments, Mr. Period introduced
“ me to the company; among whom
“ I found my old friend Jack John-
“ son.—Poor Jack! The women
“ were agreeable, and I soon began to
“ enter into their way of living. We
“ are a set of jolly friendly fellows; as
“ happy as princes when drunk, and
“ misera-

“miserable as the devil when sober!

“We, however, unite our little

“stocks together, and never disa-

“gree: to be sure, the world don’t

“think much of us, nor we of them;

“and though they honour us with

“the contemptuous name of strollers

“—if truth could appear, half of

“them are in the same situation.”

“—I am glad,” cried Mr. Weston,

“to find you happy, and contented

“with your situation.”—“I would

“not change it for any thing in the

“world,” returned Rattle. “All is

“over with me—if the old boy dies

“to-morrow, I know I am ex-

“cluded.

“I have then,” said our hero,

“an offer to make, which I hope

“will induce you to alter your

“resolution. I am in possession

“of my uncle’s fortune, and am

“ in many other respects, at this
“ moment, the happiest of men.
“ Do not imagine, Rattle, that
“ like that d——d rascal (our old
“ schoolfellow, Soapy I mean) I
“ can forget my former friendship.”
“ —Oh, oh, damme,” cried Rattle,
“ I thought so; what you have
“ tried him, ha !”—“ Yes,” re-
turned Mr. Weston, “ and am too
“ thoroughly convinced of his
“ meanness, ever to hear his name
“ again with patience. But, come
“ Rattle, leave your companions,
“ and I will introduce you where
“ you ought to be, among people
“ of fashion, and where you will
“ have a kind reception. We will
“ engage, if you will assist us by a
“ resolution to be prudent, to bring
“ on a reconciliation with your
“ uncle.” Mr. Weston now went
over

over all the particulars of his good fortune, when Mr. Rattle, after a long sigh, cried out in a theatric tone, " Then a long farewell to all
 " all my greatness—Rattle's occupation is gone !—die all, damme,
 " huzza ! Egad I'll go and take
 " leave of the company—poor
 " Period—well, let's set off in a
 " post chaise to London, damme,
 " —we'll have such a supper !"

Thus ended a conversation, by which the reader may easily perceive that extreme volatility renders us equally insensible to the approaches of good and bad fortune. Rattle now returned to his companions in adversity, relating the change which had happened in his circumstances, and expended twenty guineas which Tom had given, begging at the same time, that if Mr. Period, or
 any

any of the rest should travel near where he was, that they would come and see him. At this parting Desdemona was dissolved in tears—Statira swoon'd away—Belvidere tore her hair—Oroonoko swore—Scrub scratched his head—Hamlet went into a soliloquy—and Romeo, pulling off his wig, began kicking it about the stage.

The old Admiral and Sir Julius were infinitely amused with the history Mr. Weston gave of his friend, who, after being equipped in some of our hero's cloaths, was introduced to the family, and was soon found to be a sensible and agreeable companion, though some of his former eccentricity still remained too fixed by custom ever to be eradicated.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXIV.

The sequel of the adventures of Mr. Weston, in which he arrives to the height of human felicity.

LITTLE more was wanting to complete the happiness of our hero, than the possession of the charming Miss Acton ; nor did he wait long for this pleasing moment, for in a conversation one morning at breakfast, Sir Julius, after having expressed his friendship in warmer terms than ever, requested Mr. Weston to speak if there was any thing farther in his power to oblige him. No doubt the interrogatory had its meaning. “ Yes,” returned Tom, “ I have something to request.”

“quest.”—“Which I suppose,” returned the baronet, “I cannot grant.”—“Look, Sir, at your beautiful daughter, and decide my happiness: I have my Charlotte’s consent, and only wait for yours.”—“Ay, that I can’t grant, I have promised her to a young gentleman, an officer in my regiment; you know I dare not break my word.”—“Then,” cried our hero, “would Mr. Weston had not lived till now.”—“Well, don’t be in a passion,” continued Sir Julius; “here, read this letter; the gentleman to whom it is addressed has beside other claims, my promise.”

It was, on reading it, a commission for himself. “Good God, how kindly Sir,” cried Mr. Weston, “have you overpaid my
2 “wishes!”

“wishes!”—“Why, you rogue,” returned the baronet, “I thought it a shame a young fellow like you should idle away his time at home, when his services may be soon required by his country.”

How sweet a moment is that which gives a kind of promised future happiness to the mind long used to adversity—then are our pillows as soft as velvet—our beds are down, and gentle peace attends on all our occupations and amusements—then we enjoy the comfortable winter's fire, and taste the pleasures of the spring unmolested by harping cares and cruel reflection—This moment was arrived, when Mr. Weston, his Charlotte's finger; and, in the little parish church, vowed affection to one of the

“quest.”—“Which I suppose,” returned the baronet, “I cannot grant.”—“Look, Sir, at your beautiful daughter, and decide my happiness: I have my Charlotte’s consent, and only wait for yours.”—“Ay, that I can’t grant, I have promised her to a young gentleman, an officer in my regiment; you know I dare not break my word.”—“Then,” cried our hero, “would Mr. Weston had not lived till now.”—“Well, don’t be in a passion,” continued Sir Julius; “here, read this letter; the gentleman to whom it is addressed has beside other claims, my promise.”

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the

the finest women on earth. The bells rung all the morning; the old women formed a cavalcade at the door of the church; the young virgins anticipated the wished for day, and submitted to be pressed by their ardent rustic lovers; the sheep-washing was neglected; the whole town had a holiday.—Mr. Bowden joined the hands of the happy pair; Sir Julius, the old Admiral, Mr. and Mrs. Monckton, and all the family were present at the ceremony.

The evening was passed with the greatest conviviality; when the charming Miss Acton was led from the dance to that couch where she was to receive the happy Mr. Weston. The blushing maid did not lay long in trembling expectation, when our impatient hero entered the

3 room,

room, and imprinting a thousand kisses on her lips, realized those beauties which before he had only in idea.

We now leave the reader to imagine, with all the luxury of fancy, the height of Mr. Weston's felicity; while we mention a few relative particulars, before we close our little history. Mr. and Mrs. Monckton renewed the tender affections that first endeared them; and were again happy in a mutual and sincere regard.

Miss Dorothea, since her brother's death, had employed the whole of her time in devotion; and to insure the favour of heaven, disposed of all her money in her will to build an hospital and charity school. Mr. Bowden, through the interest of Sir Julius

Julius Acton, had procured a very comfortable living, and was now made one of the family.

Mr. Rattle began also to find an agreeable change in his affairs; his uncle began to relent, when he found how strangely his nephew was supported. And a second marriage soon after happened, which united Sally Williams to the family.

Of Mr. Soapy, little more has been heard, except that he still drags on a selfish existence, and lives somewhere on the City road.

Mr. Weston, his charming wife, and the family, set out for Weston Hall, to take possession of his estate, and to return to that pleasant spot, of long neglected hospitality.

Mr. Weston did not, among his other friends, forget the services Mr.
and

and Mrs. Macklean had rendered him ; they were always admitted to his house as visitors, and Mr. Macklean having left off business, he some times staid with his young friend a month together.

Poor Keeper closes our little narrative : this honest animal now stretched himself at ease under his master's chair, and slept in domestic safety, in Sophia's little cottage ; which was the favourite retreat of the amiable Miss Acton.

F I N I S .